TALES

OF

FASHION AND REALITY.

BY

CAROLINE FREDERICA BEAUCLERK,

AND

HENRIETTA MARY BEAUCLERK.

FIRST SERIES.

" La critique est aisée, mais l'art est difficile."

" Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see,
Thinks what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be."

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This First Series of Tales

IS DEDICATED

TO HER GRACE,

HARRIOT, DUCHESS OF ST. ALBANS,

BY

HER AFFECTIONATE COUSINS.

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PREFACE.

PORTRAITURE is the peculiar talent of the English;—the delineation of outward form engages the dull; lineal tracings of manners, or careful shading of deep passion absorbs the intellectual portion of our artists, and our writers: the same taste pervades the whole nation—that is, the great body of readers and of gazers. What, indeed, can be more interesting than sketches from nature, that forcibly display the national characteristics of our own time, our own peculiarities of station and of habits, with the effects of circumstances and individual propensity?

The easy *nonchalance* of manner, together with the high-sounding phraseology of the

world of fashion; the flurried awkwardness or affected pomp of the *parvenu;* the cautious modesty of the middle classes; the wayward fleetings, the sturdy obstinacy, or the humble pliancy of deportment in various portions of the lower grades of society, are but so many outward symptoms of varied cultivation, or of different graftings on the great crab-stock of human nature: to mark its indications, and trace its progress under particular circumstances, has been the object of the writers of this little volume, and they hope that in spite of the inequalities or imperfections incidental to a first production, their living panorama will prove at once amusing and useful.

To indicate what they consider the beauties of the book, would be impertinent; to dwell on what they may think effective passages, amusing anecdotes, or touching incidents, would not at all become them, however the public may expect in this preface a pompous full-length miniature of the work itself. When huge folios or ponderous quartos were in fashion,

such summary proceedings were not only allowable, but really necessary: even now when a sufficient likeness is preserved, it may be very praiseworthy, to enable us, by such a contrivance, to obtain an insight into the contents of three or four substantial octavos, enough for the purposes of general conversation; but in the case of a small duodecimo like this, it is not too much to hope that the book itself will be read, and its merits fairly balanced against its weaker points. If it be found to contain correct information on interesting subjects, that knowledge of fashionable society that its scenes require, and occasional aptness at description, a favourable verdict will no doubt be recorded by an intelligent public, which will be an ample reward for the labour and anxieties of the authoresses.

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THE TWO COUSINS.

BY

CAROLINE FREDERICA BEAUCLERK.

"'Tis love—and if not love,
Why then Idolatry! Ay, that's the name
To speak the broadest, deepest, strongest passion,
That ever woman's heart was borne away by."
Hunchback.

THE TWO COUSINS.

PARIS.

At the close of a cold day, at the latter end of November, in a miserable chamber of the lowest description of lodging-house in one of the Faux-bourgs of Paris, a young girl, apparently not twenty years of age, was kneeling by the side of an aged woman, whose features were contracted by the sharp pangs of approaching dissolution, as she lay extended on a bed of straw. The snow fell in flakes through the broken windows, nor was there any fire in this abode of misery. Darkness was just contended with by a small lamp, which the wind, blowing in gusts into the garret, threatened at every moment to extinguish. The young girl herself seemed to

be insensible to all outward misery; her large dark eyes were uplifted to heaven in mute supplication; tears glistened on her pale cheeks, rendered still more ghastly by a profusion of hair, black as the raven's wing, which trailed along the floor in rich luxuriance; her hands were closely pressed on her heaving bosom, as if to still its tumultuous beatings.

"Marie," gasped out the dying woman, "a drop of water to cool my parched lips."

Marie rose from her kneeling posture, and flew to a broken jug, but the water was frozen.

"Marie," said the sufferer, "I feel I have not many moments to linger in this anguish. Oh God! what torments are preparing for me in hell, with the devil and all his angels! I tremble, for, lo! they are at hand."

"Be comforted," answered the girl, who stood over her dying parent, in an agony of despair. "Mother, I will go now and sell my wedding ring."

The old woman, in a voice hardly audible, said, "Daughter, are you married?"

"I am, I am," answered Marie. "Oh, mother, I have deceived, cruelly deceived you; the young Englishman, who, by his charity, has saved us often from starvation, is my husband; by his desire, our marriage was concealed even from you, for after the ceremony he told me that he was of a noble English family. Could he bring to a home like a palace a wife, a mother-in-law—ignobly born—paupers? No, no! 'twas too revolting. He's now gone to his family, by whom I never can be acknowledged. Death will release him from Marie; she will die neglected, heart-broken, without a friend to buy her even a shroud!"

"Marie," said Madame Duroc, "you are your husband's equal; you are not, as you and all the world suppose, my daughter. My breath is nigh gone. Marie, draw nearer. In my youth I was the nurse of Mademoiselle de Préville, who married the Marquis de Valmour; they had a child, a daughter. The Marquis was old and infirm; the physicians declared he could not live long, and advised him to prepare for another

world, and to make his will. The next heir to the Marquis's estates, in default of a male heir of his body, was his greatest enemy, a distant cousin. Marie, I had a son, born at the time of your birth—a demon—hell itself possessed me—the Marquis bribed me. In the dead of the night I entered the Marquise's apartment; my heart failed me, as I saw her infant nestled on her bosom. She was awake, and inquired what brought me at so late an hour into he room. I answered not, but darted like a hungry vulture on his prey at her daughter. You, Marie, *you* are that daughter. I flung my boy on her bed, and rushed from her presence. There is written in gunpowder, on the back of my son's hand, the name of Duroc"—

"Woman, no more," exclaimed Marie: "but no, thou art no woman—fiend! was it for thee my love forsook me? is it for thee I am a beggar? May the torments of eternal misery be multiplied on thee, thou she-devil; there ranges not in hell another like thee!"

Marie paused,—her nostrils dilated,—fury in her eyes; she clutched the dying woman by the throat.

"Now could I strangle thee," said she, "but that would release thee, from those racking pains. No, no, 'twould cease those gnawing, exquisite tortures, only to be succeeded by fiercer ones; those after death are more permanent, and thou shalt have them, ay, and feel them—*then* howl, *then* gnash thy teeth!"

She ceased, for there proceeded from the mouth of Madame Duroc a low, sepulchral laugh. Marie relaxed her hold; the dying woman sank back, her glazed yet mocking eye still fixed on the girl;—gradually the laugh waxed fainter; a rattle in the throat succeeded, and Marie gazed on a corpse.

"Dead!" exclaimed she. "God! oh gracious God! what plan am I now to pursue? for all to me seems darkness and despair. I am bereft of parents, home, husband—ah, husband! Henri, for thee I rave; I will brave more for thy sake, than ever woman braved for man before. But

thou shalt claim me as thy wife. Oh, Henri! my love, my husband!"

While Marie was thus wholly given up to her impassioned feelings, a sudden gust of wind burst open the door of the room; a volume of dense smoke issued through it. Marie heard with terror the screams of the other inmates of the house; she heard the crackling, and finally the falling in of the heavy beams; fierce flames fired the straw, and rendered glaringly visible the ghastly visage of the corpse.

"How to save myself,—for save myself I must," said Marie, "and ere I die, Henri shall own me, as his lawful wife. Should he prove false,—well, then, in the bridal chamber, at the very altar, while he swears his perjured love to another, this dagger shall be plunged—eternal heaven! it shall—what! into his bosom—revenge myself on the idol I worship so intensely, so madly? No, no! away, ye cursed, damned thoughts, in Marie's heart shall the dagger lie and rust."

She then dashed towards the window,—a casement with bars of iron, which she tore away by force, till her small hands were steeped in blood. She had made an aperture large enough to admit her body, when, with a loud crash, the floor of the garret gave way. Marie crawled along the parapet, and her slight form was soon lost to view, by the dense clouds of black smoke.

"How many persons perished in the fire?" asked one of the many idlers, which the conflagration of the night before had drawn to the still smoking ruins.

"They were all saved," was the reply, "except an old *lingère* who lay sick in the room under the roof, and her daughter, the beautiful Marie Duroc."

At these words a young and extremely handsome man, who was distributing alms to the wretched sufferers of the fire, sank down on the ground with a heavy groan.

"He must be an Englishman," was the remark, "cette nation est remplie de sensibilité."

THE COUNTRY.

"I hope and trust," exclaimed Honoria St. Leger, the only daughter of Lord Harley, to her governess Miss Goodbody,—"I hope and trust, that my cousin Henry Mortimer is *handsome!*"

"Honoria, suppose you were to practise on the harp or piano, instead of wasting your time on a subject of such very slight importance," replied Miss Goodbody, sharply, who being *laide à faire peur*, herself, condemned all admiration shown to handsome individuals.

"I declare," continued she, "since Lady Harley decided on your coming out this season, you have done nothing but talk of balls and flirtations, *en bref*, of all sorts of improprieties."

"Coming out this season!" burst from her impatient auditress; "yes, that period for which I have so long panted is arrived. A month hence, and Almack's shall claim her queen."

Lady Harley now entered the room, and Honoria began industriously thumping on the

piano, "Suoni la tromba," with all her might and main.

"For Heaven's sake, don't quite deafen me," exclaimed Lady Harley, affectedly; "oh, this education must kill me! Honoria, I desire that you will come to dinner to-day in time to be handed in, instead of rushing in after the first course, disturbing every one at table, and at last plunging yourself in between some native and Miss Goodbody."

Honoria at this hint glided from the room, and in due time appeared in the drawing-room, the only occupant of which was Lord Harley.

"Well, Honoria," said he, kissing his lovely daughter's forehead, "Do you like the thoughts of coming out?"

"I exist on the thought by day, I dream of it by night," replied Honoria; "I am certain only very stupid people visit in country-houses; I have never seen any person I could like down here; but I am sure to like Henry, for Lady Jemima Charleton writes me word, "qu'il est beau comme l'amour," and that he will be the rage in London

this season. Jemima means to call him her especial favourite, for he dances the mazourka and galoppes to desperation."

Lady Harley, Miss Goodbody, and Mr. and Mrs. Percy Lennox now entered the room.

Mrs. Lennox was all *but* a pretty woman, and a most decided flirt;—it was her ambition to appear a naïve,—unsophisticated and innocent creature! "qui disoit des platitudes, et qui débitoit des doubles entendres."

Mr., Lady Janet and Miss Wilmington next made their appearance, looking as if just returned from the North Pole. Miserable objects people generally look after a long winter's drive to a country-house, and miserable did the Wilmingtons look when emerged from their toilette,—the ladies *torché* by the cold having numbed the hapless maids' fingers on the box, and the natural ruby of Lady Janet's cheeks having transferred itself to a temporary residence on her nose, from whence it glowed warmly.

Lady Janet was the daughter of the Marquis of Kilrandy. Strange are the vicissitudes of

life:—she had very nearly persuaded a Duke to marry her; when, without excuse or remorse, his Grace, *un beau matin*, gave her the slip, and married his bailiff's daughter. Lady Janet, on the principle of "quand on n'a pas ce qu'on aime, il faut aimer ce qu'on a," wisely accepted Mr. Wilmington, a vulgar, rollicking, one hundred-ton-weight of a man, and M. P. for Sudbury.

Miss Wilmington was a quiet, inoffensive girl;—one who went through her London campaign without partner, lover, or éclat; thereby escaping the cat-o'-nine-tails lash of criticism, which in the country is dealt out so unmercifully to every young votaress of fashion. She passed for a very nice person. Oh, the inconceivable and indescribable horrors contained under that denomination!

"Well, really," said Lord Harley, "we get to dine later every day,—are the Hotchkins' expected?"

"We are to endure that infliction," groaned Lady Harley.

"I shall be thankful to go to London, to

escape all these natives. How people," added she, "can find pleasure in dining out in the country, is a problem I never could solve."

"I never could," thought Mr. Wilmington, in despair from the lateness of the hour of getting any dinner at all.

"Nor I," thought Lady Janet, as she felt her nose, which seemed in a blaze.

"Nor I," thought the daughter, as she looked in the glass, and saw her hair all straight and blowsy over her face, giving her much the appearance of a she-bear.

"I am dying to see your handsome cousin," lisped out Mrs. Percy Lennox to Honoria, anticipating a good flirtation in perspective with the said cousin. "I have heard a great deal about him.—They say he is dreadfully wild (as if he were a partridge, thought Honoria) "qu'il a un air très distingué,"—has written a tragedy, and hates women."

"I have never seen him," replied Honoria, "for he has been brought up in France, whence he returned only a few days ago."

"And a great pity he did not remain there," said Lady Harley, in a detestably bad humour. "Second sons are the ruin of every provident mother's temper and constitution. His elder brother, Viscount Fitzallan has a very fine income, and is a very nice agreeable man;—while I dare say, this Mr. Mortimer is an unmannerly savage, with a Saracen's head; who travels on the top of the mail, from which he will descend, with a face like a boiled lobster, and great purple chopped hands."

"Indeed," said Mrs. Lennox, delighted at having been able to pump so much information out of Honoria. She hailed the arrival of Henry Mortimer with delight, to add another victim to her well-filled list, and, although she candidly confessed to herself, that her charms were rather *passée*, yet she consoled herself with the reflection, that when a man is *agaçé* by a married woman, he does not expect that first bloom of youthful freshness, which is required from a young lady on her preferment.

The Hotchkins in the meantime arrived, all in

an awful state of fuss; and rejoicing, as they came along, in their family tub-like looking coach, that they went but once in the year through the ordeal of dining at the *great house*. This family does not require much comment, as they possessed the usual quantum of affectation, stupidity, vulgarity, red-elbows, and dowdy dresses, of which, more or less, *all campagnards* can boast.

Lady Harley detested every species of *native*, and electioneering interest alone induced her to ask them to Sudbury House. In London, (for in these days of reform every one repairs there for the season), any recognition passing to them from herself never entered her head.

Several complaints had reached Lord Harley's ears of the extreme hauteur of his lady, but she ever, by way of answer, replied, "If they set so great a value on a bow from her carriage, she would willingly drive up and down Hyde Park, with a chinese *mandarin* stuck in the front of her britscha."

Lady Harley now gave a long tirâde on the

impertinence of younger sons; and the party at Sudbury House all adjourned to dinner.

We have as yet said nothing about Honoria St. Leger. She was beautiful in every sense of the word. None could see her bright blue eyes, her bright brown hair, her pure alabaster skin, and her perfect sylph-like form, without admiring and loving such an enchanting girl; but Honoria had richer and nobler gifts from heaven than mere personal charms; she was the very reverse of her mother, who was apathetic, unfeeling, haughty, and an egotist. Honoria was the child of impulse and sensibility. Hers was the consoling bosom for grief. Her laugh was the gladsome echo of a joyous open heart; she feared her mother, but she would have laid her young life down for her father. It is a received opinion in the world, that a fond daughter will prove a devoted wife; and harsh would we deem the Cynic who would have decided otherwise in the case of Honoria. A deep observer might perhaps argue, the fairest fruit may be the most deadly poison,—the richest

soil may be the hot-bed of the most obnoxious weed, — the whitest parchment have graven on it words that harrow up the soul, disgust and sicken the heart of man; and Honoria, at present so lovely and so pure, may change — those volatile bounding spirits may degenerate into heartless frivolity—that energy into ungovernable passion—that spirit, at present so much to be loved, into obstinacy.

But we must leave our heroine for the present, and turn to the Misses Hotchkins, who sat uneasily gulping down *soupe a la reine*, thinking it all the time the most gruel-like stuff they had ever tasted. Perhaps it is at dinner you can best decide whether an individual is *du bon ton* or not. The tranquillity, amounting to apathetic indifference, of the aristocracy, is a strange contrast to the hurry-flurry, overexcited, and heated state of the *parvenu*.

The Hotchkins were *en scène* the whole of dinner. No sooner had Miss Hotchkin swallowed something the wrong way, and nearly coughed herself into a convulsion, than the

knife flew on Miss Annie Hotchkin's finger, and leaving a gash like a sabre cut, made her nigh faint away. Mr. Bob Hotchkin next managed to over-balance his chair, and to fall with a violent concussion on the ground, deluging at the same time Mrs. Lennox's lap with the contents of a hot water plate.

In the midst of all the mopping attendant on Mr. Bob's mishap, Henry Mortimer arrived. His aunt, Lady Harley, greeted him with a countenance, the tart and acid expression of which can only be compared to double-distilled Chili vinegar—an aspect which every handsome detrimental must have, or eventually will, meet with.

Honoria could have cried through vexation, when she saw her cousin place himself next to Mrs. Lennox. She saw him look around the table, and alight his glance on Miss Annie Hotchkin. This was too much for woman's patience. What! Miss Annie Hotchkin, with a face like pickled cabbage, to be taken for one moment for Miss St. Leger! Impossible!

So, throwing herself rather forward, and shaking back the long ringlets which overshadowed her blushing cheeks, she said, "Papa, shall we take some wine together?"

Henry Mortimer raised his eyes at the sound of that soft low-toned voice; admiration beamed from his eyes, as he looked long and ardently at the beautiful speaker. Honoria blushed crimson, and her confusion increased on hearing Mortimer say to Mrs. Lennox,—

"I never saw so lovely a girl,"—to which that lady responded,—

"Do you really think so? those ringlets give her the look of a water-spaniel."

Honoria felt as though she could have pulverised her in a mortar. All people with heads like poodles' backs hold long hair in aversion.

When the ladies retired to the drawing-room, Mrs. Lennox was in ecstacy about Henry Mortimer: "He has got the eyes of a gazelle," said she, "avec un cercle de bistre."

"Well, he's not much amiss," remarked Mrs. Hotchkin, "but he looks so pale and wan."

"Oh, my dear Mrs. Hotchkin," exclaimed Honoria, "would you have him like a red carnation? If there is a thing I dislike, it is a man with a face like a hearth-brick."

"Besides, there is something so poetical in a pale cheek; how can you believe a man to be in a consumption for you, and you behold a pair of bursting red cheeks, giving him the look of an apoplectic Cupid," added Mrs. Lennox.

"Sweet balls Almack's are. I find it impossible to get my girls away from Willis's rooms," said Mrs. Hotchkin.

Mrs. and the Misses Hotchkins, let it be understood, had been rewarded for waiting with the greatest patience the whole of six successive Wednesdays in King Street, by being admitted at a ball the night before the Derby—a night well chronicled in their memories and journals, by both the young ladies having horrified the spectators with two tremendous

falls in doing the "back step, in the galloppe.

"I suppose Henry Mortimer is looking out for an heiress?" said Mrs. Lennox to Honoria.

"And he will succeed, for he is as beautiful as le Comte del M-d-co, et distingué comme le beau D'O——y. What nobler use can an heiress make of her wealth, than in laying it at the feet of her lover? besides, it makes a better distribution of money in the world, as portionless girls generally seek wealthy men," was Honoria's reply.

"How every member of a family," continued Mrs. Lennox, "sanctions a marriage as it regards *leurs propres interêts.* 'Everything one can wish,' says the mother, 'twenty thousand a-year, descent from the Conquest, liberal jointure, abundant pin-money.' 'Very satisfactory,' says the father, 'good home for the boys, excellent cook, claret unrivalled. 'Capital fellow,' says the brother, 'grouse shooting in Scotland, hunting box in Leicestershire, good pack of fox-hounds.' 'A very nice person,' says the sister, 'never smokes, box at the

opera.' It never occurs to any one to ask, whether the woman really likes the man whose companion she is to be, perhaps for forty or fifty years."

The conversation now lagged, as it generally does with ladies after dinner, who look with so much mistrust upon each other, that when scandal is worn out they all sink into a state of torpor. Lady Harley fell asleep on the sofa, and Lady Janet retired to apply cold cream to her olfactory nerve, which a bad indigestion had now rendered the colour of a red morocco chair.

On the appearance of the gentlemen, Tableaux vivans were proposed as a way of killing time. By this expression, one would really think that people found their lives too long. Morning, noon, and night, do not yawns, and cries of 'I am so bored, what can I do with myself?' rend the air.

Mrs. Lennox seized hold of Mortimer, and declared she would act Jeannie, provided he was Jamie, in "Auld Robin Gray;" but Lord Harley interfered, and decided that Honoria should be Jeannie.

Chaperons may imagine the agony of Lady Harley, who looked daggers at her lord, and prepared, in her mind, a good curtain lecture for his *pas d'ane.*

Governesses in general, are a very fussy race; and Miss Goodbody, whose talent in that way had obtained for her the *soubriquet* of "Quick-fidget," at the first mention of Tableaux, had pulled out every sort of theatrical costume, which she had been in the habit of encasing and disfiguring every visitor in, at Sudbury. "Here," said she, "is a blue satin sailor's jacket, with continuations to match. Now, Mr. Mortimer, off with your coat."

Suiting the action to the word, she gave his coat a violent jerk, in which act a miniature fell to the ground. She picked it up, and as her eye glanced on the painting, she exclaimed, "What a beautiful woman!—she must be a foreigner."

Henry Mortimer's agitation became excessive; large tears suffused his dark eyes; the blood rushed in crimson floods to his face, as with a tremulous and husky voice, he faltered

out, "She was a foreigner;—she is now no more!"

Honoria looked petrified with astonishment. Mortimer in a moment recovered himself, and the Tableau proceeded, but it was again doomed to be interrupted by an express for Mr. Mortimer, from London.

"Great God! this is more than I can bear," exclaimed he, on reading a letter sealed with black.

"What's happened now?" was the general cry.

"Fitzallan was drowned this morning in the Serpentine, in endeavouring to save a man who had fallen in;" and Mortimer, quite unmanned at the severity of the affliction, buried his face in his hands, and wept bitterly.

LONDON.

"That dawdling de Valmour proposed to me last night," said Lady Jemima Charleton, to

her friend Honoria St. Leger, as they were talking over the ball of the preceding night, in Lady Jemima's boudoir, in Park Lane. At this her ladyship gave a deep yawn. She was thirty years of age, and had frequently indulged in the inquiring ejaculation of "Why don't the men propose?"

She had left off dancing; for the beaux for some years had left off asking her to dance. The fact was, that her original set of lovers were all morally dead, and had become useless members of society, at least of the dancing part, by having married, without giving her the first choice; and she became extremely tired of sitting on the blue sofas of Almack's, without any man speaking to her, and chaperons occupied with their daughters, and daughters' partners, lovers, rivals, and the rest of the paraphernalia.

In order to appear girlish, Lady Jemima struck up a violent friendship for Honoria, the beauty of the year. Riding parties, quadrilles, costumées, and pic-nics were got up; the con-

sequences were, that as Honoria could not occupy more than six men at a time, Lady Jemima came in for the cast-offs, in the shape of young incipient guardsmen, who were not as yet perfect at drill. Lady Jemima, therefore, went off dancing mad, and grew as thin as possible. She was sometimes ready to drop from fatigue; every bone, spine, and rib aching in her back, feet swollen, so as to make her shoes feel an inch too short for her foot, head in a whirl, blowing and panting sufficient to turn a windmill. But catching a glimpse of Honoria at Almack's, bounding away in the galoppe, her fairy feet scarce touching the floor, Lady Jemima would seize hold of Le Marquis de Valmour, and nearly kill the unfortunate spooney, by making him drag her round the room, at a pace much resembling the galloping of a hackney-coach-horse. But to return to Lady Jemima in her boudoir:

"I shall accept de Valmour," said she; "but will not marry him till the season's over—that's flat. The notion of passing a dull honey-moon

at a villa, when Almack's is in its zenith, the opera unrivalled, a ball at Devonshire House in perspective, that darling Duc de R—g—na dancing like mad, (Honoria, *how* that man galloppes !) is not endurable."

A page here entered, and informed Lady Jemima, *qu'une femme de chambre* had come, by appointment, to see her ladyship.

"*Qu'elle monte,*" was the order, and a beautiful girl appeared.

"What is your name? Can you dress hair well,—put in false hair so as to escape detection? Is your temper good, health strong, character without a blemish? I hope you have no followers.—Je veux dire d'amans."

Lady Jemima could say no more, and she fell back exhausted on her chaise longue. The girl answered in very good English, with a slight foreign accent, that she had learnt her *métier* under Isidor; that she was twenty years of age, and that her name was Marie. Lady Jemima, then informed her, that experience never came till thirty.

"Try her, Honoria," whispered she. "Madame La Blonde recommended her to me, and I must not quarrel with my milliner till I become a dowdy, that is, une femme mariée."

"By the way, darling," said Lady Jemima, as her friend rose to depart, "they all say that you are the prettiest débutante of the season, and that you are desperately in love with Fitzallan."

What millions of thoughts will rush through the mind in one moment. Each separate one would consume a whole existence to write down. Honoria's head was in a whirl as she entered her carriage:—

"And so they say I love my cousin," murmured she. "Too true, too true,—love? Ah, no; *that's* not the word for the passion that fires me into madness, warps my every faculty, absorbs my reason. No more I'll play the drivelling fool.—Hah!" continued she, as the carriage stopped at her father's mansion, "I know not, whether the thought, which fills my brain, come from heaven or hell—proceed from angel or from

devil; but sleep shall not again close these eyes, till I have triumphed over Henry's heart. No saint soaring to heaven in holy glory; no king mounted on his throne; no warrior, returning victorious from battle, ever felt the intoxicating delirium of joy, which I shall know, if I become the wife of Henry Fitzallan. If I fail, oh, then, deep shall be my sleep, for death shall claim me as his bride!"

Lord Fitzallan had just rung for lights, and was tossing over a dozen of pink and blue triagonal notes. "Should I have had all these pressing invitations," said he, scornfully, "had my poor brother not been drowned.—Even my aunt, Lady Harley, who used to spurn and dread Henry Mortimer,—that woman would now kneel to me, to make her daughter the wife of Viscount Fitzallan." His reverie was here interrupted by the door opening. A figure approached, closely muffled in a large mantle, which was hastily cast off, and disclosed to the astonished and horrified gaze of Fitzallan, the

form of Honoria St. Leger. Bloodless was that face, the envy and admiration of all London,—bloodshot were those eyes, which had racked the poetic imaginations of all her numerous admirers.

"Cousin," said she—and she stopped, for a choking in her throat denied her utterance. The unhappy girl again proceeded: "Henry!" —the shame and terrors she endured were too much for her—the tears sluiced her cheeks in torrents, while her sobs seemed to threaten a bursting heart.

"My sweet cousin," exclaimed Fitzallan, "what heavy grief is this? do not sob so,—heavens! how pale you look."

"Henry," said Honoria, passionately, as she fell before him, and clasped his knees. "In me, behold the victim of a desperate, maddened love, which, if unpaid, this heart will bankrupt break. Now take my hand, and hear me swear an oath, which registered will be in the heaven of heavens.—No other shall place the wedding-

ring upon this hand—save him, the object of my adoration. If he spurn me, I tell you, cousin, at his feet a corpse I'll lie."

"Dearest Honoria," said Lord Fitzallan, his kind heart moved even to tears at the sight of her agony; "what can I do to alleviate your sorrows?"

"*Become my husband!*" screamed she, with so loud, so terrible a voice, that Fitzallan could hardly credit its proceeding from so frail and delicate a being.

"Honoria, quit this house!" cried Fitzallan. "A moment longer, and your fair unspotted name will be defaced for ever. Would you become a base, dishonoured thing—the jest of fools, and horror of the wise? Would you be loathed, be pointed at by the few who prize their honour dearer than their lives? Oh! how the millions who have lost all sense and love of virtue, would glory in *your* fall! Cousin, cousin,—thus to have left your father's roof,—thus to degrade the name of *woman* by kneeling to a *man*. Oh, shame! shame! shame!"

"Henry," replied Honoria, "refuse my hand in marriage, you sign my death-warrant. My cup of misery is already full!—Say 'No,' a drop will overflow the cup;—my death will lie at your door."

She could no more, and she fell in a dead faint on the ground.

* * * * *

A week after the events detailed in the preceding pages, Honoria was in her boudoir, surrounded by white satin, Brussels lace, dressmakers, milliners, and jewellers.

Lady Jemima Charleton, in the midst of all these preparations for approaching magnificent nuptials, was announced with her intended husband, a laced-up whiskered, chimpanzee-looking thing,—Le Marquis de Valmour.

Honoria desired the room to be cleared. "You, Marie, remain," said she, "and show Lady Jemima the splendid diamond ring Lord Fitzallan sent me this morning."

Lady Jemima's admiration was *sans bornes*. "De Valmour," said she, "je te fais un cadeau

pareil," drawing a ring off her finger;—she begged of him to wear it for her sake.

Marie, at the mention of De Valmour's name, turned deadly pale; and had the ladies not been thoroughly occupied thinking of their respective lovers, they would have seen that the young femme de chambre trembled excessively.

Marie perceiving that the Marquis had drawn off his right-hand glove for the purpose of placing Lady Jemima's ring, accosted him smilingly, saying, "Pardon, Mons. le Marquis, but the *other* hand should wear the bridal present."

"Of course it should; 'tis nearest the heart," exclaimed Lady Jemima. "Goodness me! mon cœur! you look in a scarlet fever."

"Perhaps he wears some lady's ring on the other hand," said Honoria.

"Or," added Marie, fixing on him her dark eyes, till he was nearly blinded by their fire, as from the sun's rays, "some name may be 'graven on the back of his hand."

"Oh, you Don Juan!" exclaimed Lady Jemima, who, like all old maids, was rather

pleased than otherwise at finding out a specimen of rakishness in her *prètendu's* disposition.

Le Marquis de Valmour now drew off his glove with the air of a man who had twenty women in love with him all at once. "I confess," said he, "to have had the name of a little grisette written in gunpowder on my hand;—she was desperate after me to be sure."

"I do not wonder at it," responded Lady Jemima, lovingly.

"Monsieur n'est pas si mal," added Marie. She drew near as Lady Jemima took the Marquis's hand in her own. "Ah!" said Marie, "Marquis de Valmour, I denounce thee for an hypocritical liar. On thy hand behold thy real name 'graven. Down, down with thy assumed pride! thou art a base-born changeling, the son of a beggar-woman!"

The Marquis rushed to make his escape from the room; but Marie placed herself before the door.

"Who are you?" at length faltered out the conscience-stricken Marquis.

"Mons. Duroc," answered Marie, "the poor, despised girl, who now stands before you, is Marie, the daughter of Le Marquis de Valmour!"

Lady Jemima's hysterical screams, in the meantime, were deafening. "I would have gone through every species of martyrdom for de Valmour," said she, "but—but we shall be so poor, that I shall have to travel by the stage coach, make apple puddings, and darn my husband's stockings, Oh, that it should ever come to this!"

"Console yourself, *ma bien aimée*," said her lover, for he did not wish to lose her thirty thousand charms, "and make me the happiest of men."

"Après tout," was the mental reflection of Lady Jemima, as she stepped into her barouche, "A man is always a man, and any thing is better than to be an old maid;—ma foi! *that* is too dreadful!"

"My dear Marie," said Honoria, when her friend had departed, "had you not better have

remained in France for the chance of finding your relatives?"

"Alas! Madam," replied Marie, "the house I lived in caught fire. I narrowly escaped instant death by clambering over the roofs of several houses; a compassionate woman let me into her room by the window, and gave me a few francs; with this I proceeded to London,—for, Lady, I came to seek one for whom the love of father or mother sinks into nothingness."

"Well, Marie," replied Honoria, "a week hence, and I shall be a proud and happy bride."

And with all the selfishness of a person about to be married, thoroughly occupied, and anxious to make every one interested in their own concerns, the now triumphant Honoria began consulting Marie whether she should be married in diamonds or pearls.

"I think, considering Lord Fitzallan's enormous wealth," was the decision, "that it befits his bride best to wear diamonds. Qu'en pensez-vous?"

* * * * *

"The bishop is arrived; the ceremony must commence immediately," was the pompously delivered command of Lady Harley. The triumph of the happy mother was complete; her daughter, considered the most beautiful from amongst the fairest flowers of that well-stocked market-garden, London, now about to become the wife of one who had caused sleepless nights and aching hearts to countless numbers of the Almack's belles.

The spacious drawing-room was on this occasion converted into a place of worship. A crimson velvet altar was erected, and the venerable Bishop stood ready to join the hands of the high-born and lovely cousins. About a hundred of the different parties' most intimate friends were assembled. Can philosophy explain how the wealthy claim so many friends? A murmur of admiration ran through the room as the bride appeared, attired in white satin. A zone of diamonds encircled her small waist; her hair in long ringlets fell in rich luxuriance on her marble shoulders. She was leaning on the arm

of Lord Fitzallan, and was followed by six fair bride's-maids. Those who consider marriage as a sacred and solemn tie—a tie which is to render two people happy or miserable "till death do them part," might have censured the behaviour of the bride, as with thoughtless levity and girlish impatience she laughingly dragged her cousin up to the altar. The marriage ceremony is more impressive when performed in a sacred edifice; and Honoria looked so happy, and so dazzlingly beautiful, and had been longing so for this day, which she expected to be the happiest of her life, that this want of decorum was not observed. The lovely bride only caught the ill-suppressed murmurs of "beautiful," which, however, floated to her senses more gratefully than the sweetest melody could have done. The cousins now placed themselves before the altar; the ceremony commenced, and the bishop's deep sonorous voice soon quieted the room, and awed every person into silence. Suddenly a form glided through the bridal group; — 'twas that of the French girl. For a

moment she paused in breathless agitation; her eyeballs strained, her hands clenched in each other. A long piercing shriek rung through the room—"Henri, Henri!" was uttered, and Marie was in Lord Fitzallan's arms.

"She is mad," exclaimed Lady Harley, "seize her and take her away!"

"Lay a finger on me who dares," said Marie, "and by Heavens I'll dig his eyes out."

"Who is this mad woman?" vociferated Lady Harley.

"*I am his wife!*" returned Marie, with a voice of thunder; then instantly changing it for one full of tenderness and fondness,—"Henri, Henri! I have sought for thee so long, and thou —thou lovest me still!"

Honoria now attempted to tear her away from Lord Fitzallan's arms. Marie darted on her with the fury of a lioness. She looked awful, and almost satanic, as with a blow she sent Honoria reeling into her mother's arms.

"Hah!" said Marie, as if some horrid thought had flashed through her mind, "'Tis *she* who

would rob me of thy embrace! — O, my soul's joy! Speak—thou canst not wed another!"

"Marie, Marie!" answered the wretched Fitzallan, "by my soul, I thought you had perished in the flames."

"I lived for thee," said Marie.

"My Lord, my Lord," exclaimed Lady Harley to her bewildered husband, "why stand you thus entranced, when you see our child's heart breaking, her prospects blighted, her honour blasted, ruin and shame trampling on our name, and all by a base-born menial, the very dust beneath your feet?—Away, away with yon minion beast!"

"Out, hag!" screamed, rather than said, the infuriated Marie. The blue veins rose in her forehead; her teeth were set, as if in firm defiance; foaming at the mouth; her lips livid with rage: she said, loudly and clearly, "He is *my* husband." The blood gushed in streams from her nose and mouth, and issued also from her ears. She sank down by the altar, and murmuring gently, "Henri, Henri!" expired without a struggle, at her husband's feet.

Then burst forth long suppressed tears from Fitzallan's eyes; then did his breast seem rent by grief. He threw himself on the dead body, and steeped his clothes in her crimson blood. Honoria wept by his side.

"Avaunt, fiend!" said Fitzallan fiercely to her. "Quit my sight for ever, I would face ten score of devils, rather than behold thee,—aye, thee." Shuddering with disgust, he hid his face from her.

"Alas, Henry!" replied Honoria, "it was not my doing."

"Thou liest, base reptile! 'twas all thy doing," vociferated Fitzallan. "Oh, thou sinful one! cast not one look upon *my wife;* those horrid eyes would sear her pure fair skin."

Saying this, he carried the dead body of Marie to a corner of the room, quite maddened and frantic with grief. Alas! reason, that noblest gift of God to man, had fled, and the once gay, handsome, and talented Lord Fitzallan, was now a laughing, dancing maniac.

Honoria watched over him for two whole long

days ; she heard his ravings after Marie ; no persuasion could induce her to leave his bedside. At the close of the second day, a glimmering of reason seemed to return. The first object that met his eyes was Honoria bending over him, still arrayed in her bridal satin ; her cheek colourless, her eyes dim, her bright ringlets disordered and matted. He gazed on her mournfully ; she knelt by him, and taking his hand in her own, covered it with kisses.

" Cousin," said Lord Fitzallan, " I spoke harshly to thee,—forgive me ;—the cold dank dews of death are on me : live, and be happy. For me, I shall again see Marie—once more shall press her pure angelic form,—once more inhale her balmy breath.—Marie, Marie ! my love ! my wife !"

His manly breast heaved with anguish ; agonizing cries, sobs, and groans, burst from his wasted frame.

" Still on Marie," murmured Honoria. " In death must she be my rival ?—oh ! despair, despair !"

Suddenly her mouth was arched in smiles,—a look of triumph flashed from her eyes,—an inward transport caused her bosom to heave with violence,—a crimson flush mantled in her cheek. None would have dreamed that so fair a form could harbour such black and dreadful thoughts as filled in that moment Honoria's bosom. It might have been likened to an holy temple, beautiful to gaze on;—dig up its foundation, explore its vaults, and you find worms feeding on green and festering corruption!

Honoria smoothed the ruffled pillow,—she threw open the window sashes; the cool evening breeze softly fanned Fitzallan's fevered brow, and waved his luxuriant hair. "Drink, love," murmured Honoria, as she held a glass of water to his parched lips. He drank half of its contents.

"Thanks, cousin," said he, faintly.

"Almighty God, forgive me!" exclaimed Honoria, as she drained off the remainder of the water to the last drop. "Eternity!—the thought is madness. Oh, that like a dog I could die.

But after death there is a judgment,—the last trump clangs already in my ears,—thousands and myriads will be saved! After death there is a future;—for some it will be bliss eternal,—for others, for the damned,—and I—I am of that number—that futurity will be hell!"

* * * * *

An hour had elapsed, and Lord and Lady Harley repaired up stairs to inquire after Lord Fitzallan. "Poor little Honoria makes an excellent nurse," was the fond father's exclamation, as he knocked at the door of the chamber. Receiving no answer, he entered the room, when,—oh, horror!—Lord Fitzallan lay on the bed a corpse; and stretched by his side, her head coiled on his bosom, with one hand clasped in his, while the other clutched a phial, labelled "laudanum," reposed, cold and stiff by death, the form of Honoria.

JOURNAL OF A CHAPERON.

BY

HENRIETTA MARY BEAUCLERK.

Se non e véro
E ben trovato.

Come what come may,
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.
SHAKSPEARE.

JOURNAL OF A CHAPERON.

From time immemorial, marriage has been considered as the most happy and blissful state, man or woman can enter. In our earliest childhood, we are instructed in those accomplishments likely to fascinate the understandings of the opposite sex, (namely, the male); and the charms likely to enslave their minds are studiously practised as we advance in years. Little is it ever imagined, that the infant just born, lying helpless and feeble in the nurse's arms, will some day become a leading star in the bright hemisphere of fashion; courted and flattered by the gay and wealthy; trampling on the heads of many, as they kneel to do homage to her transcendent beauty. Time rolls on,—

years pass by,—and still the same scene occurs; but with little alteration. The budding girl is transformed into the sober matron, with perhaps one or more daughters to seek establishments for in the world. Her own feelings have become blunted by age and time; she no longer remembers the love she bore her husband, when first united to him, — for that passion has sobered down into a sort of platonic attachment. She fancies the only object a young lady has in marrying, is to improve her station in life, both in respect to money and connexions; never thinking for a moment love could hold any sway in her daughter's choice, as she considers that feeling seldom exists except in the imagination.

Such, however, are not my ideas. I have lived long in the world, and in my experience have found, that the happiest marriages are those in which a mutual regard for each other prompted the parties, — if their means allowed of it,—to enter into the holy state of matrimony. I am not an advocate for people marrying to

reduce each other to a state of beggary; nor on the other hand, for unions founded entirely on avaricious motives. Persons may be united,—minds only can meet. "A great fortune with a wife," says an old adage, "is a bed full of brambles." A late writer remarks, "The real beauty of your heiress is the ready penny, and she is chosen like old plate, not for its fashion, but its weight and value; what though her eyes want brilliancy, her diamonds possess that virtue."

It is a dangerous thing for a young person just emancipated from the school-room, to be allowed to plunge headlong into the whirlpool of fashion, without a mother, a friend, a chaperon, to guide her through the difficult path of life. Men may be very clever, but they are not capable of superintending the début of a young girl; that task is always much better fulfilled when intrusted to the management of one of the female sex.

As a mother, and chaperon, I have been highly successful. Nearly every scheme I have formed, has turned out well; it is certain no

pains were ever spared, and the commodity I had to dispose of was of the best quality. Lord Burleigh has said, "Marry thy daughters, lest they marry themselves." From the time I became a member of the respectable bench of chaperons, I made use of the above learned saying as my motto. Yet I have never forced my daughters into marriages inconsonant to their feelings. When a man, desirable in every respect, has presented himself to their notice, I have certainly enumerated his good qualities, and encouraged his attentions to the utmost; this I consider quite fair, as young girls cannot be expected to possess the circumspection of their parents in those affairs, a thorough knowledge of which can only be acquired by years of intense study, and deep observation.

Before I mention the various trials I underwent in endeavouring to marry my youngest daughter, I will, for the benefit of chaperons, give, what I have always considered with respect to Fashionable Life, the

TEN GOLDEN RULES.

In early life, let your children be instructed in every accomplishment suited to females. If they have not an innate taste for music, let it be an acquired one. Some men prefer a clever wife to a pretty one.

The daughter must not be a proficient in more languages than the mother. Conversations may be carried on in foreign tongues, full of important matter to the young lady and chaperon; which, if the latter is unacquainted with the language, might be productive of much harm.

When told your daughter is lovely, do not contradict that opinion, it seems only like affectation, denying what is really the case; besides, the world is always very willing to detract from the merit possessed by any individual.

Never speak ill of another person's daugh-

ter: it can do no good, and appears envious. Every one is lovely in the eyes of their respective admirer.

Observing the same things daily, breeds indifference. Young ladies should not be seen too frequently by the person you wish to interest in their favour.

> "A maid oft seen, a gown oft worn,
> Are disesteemed, and held in scorn."

The old adage of "hot love soon cold," I have often found in my long experience to be true. That which has been kindled with haste, seldom retains its heat long.

It is absolutely necessary that a chaperon be perfectly well acquainted with the peerage, in all its intricacies and details. The débutante should likewise have a slight knowledge of that important work. Shakspeare must have laboured under a temporary aberration of intellect, when he wrote, "What's in a name?"

Surely the names of Howard, Fitzroy, Russell, Lennox, Montague, &c., &c., will bear the palm over those of Brown, Johnson, Thompson, Figgins, &c., &c.

If a girl unfortunately takes a fancy to a man, unfit to be her husband, it must not be noticed. "Love turns the more fiercely for obstructions." If the passion increases, talk the subject over lightly, — detect some feature he possesses not quite in harmony with the rest of his person,—criticise, and laugh at it; for Addison says, "Ridicule perhaps is a better expedient against love, than sober advice."

Beware of younger sons; they are a race especially patronized by girls, who are not aware of the danger of such proceedings. In general society they are of use to call the carriage, take mothers to the supper-room, &c., &c.

Never be guilty of taking your daughter to country-balls: she can only acquire bad man-

ners, rude habits, and vulgar notions. A girl of rank and fashion ought to feel that London is *her element*.

I am the mother of a family of six daughters, five of whom are all well married. Emily, the youngest, has been at every watering place, every ball, opera, breakfast, and concert, during five tedious summer campaigns; but she still remains on hand, without my being able to divine the reason. This greatly surprises me, as she is allowed by every one to be agreeable, witty, and handsome: some are ill-natured enough to say she is a flirt, but people are so envious, the fault cannot be mine. I will here, for the general instruction of the world, give an account of my qualities as chaperon.

I have the extraordinary talent of never being *de trop* in a *tête à tête*. When I am not wanted, I can gaze intently on the opposite side of the room, perhaps start a new subject when the conversation flags, and when once more set going, drop at once into perfect silence. Some-

times I can lend a deaf ear; nay more, rival in blindness the goddess of fortune. It is my extreme good-luck that I am blessed with a very strong constitution, so that I can endure the utmost fatigue in situations the most harassing. My daughter is, indeed, very fortunate in possessing a mother, with so sweet a temper as mine. With such favourable circumstances, and all her excellent qualities, it is very hard I cannot unite Emily to some *bon partie*. With Emily I have been so peculiarly unfortunate, that to hinder all chaperons from committing the same faults I have unintentionally been guilty of, I will give an account of a week's exertions during a full London season; I here make a faithful extract from my private journal, —a work I have kept with the utmost regularity, however great the excitement I have laboured under.

June the 12th, Monday. — Had been engaged to Lady Mortimer's water party for some time; it was, however, at Emily's most earnest

request that I went. The party consisted of Lady Charlotte Stanby, and her daughter Fanny: Lady Charlotte is the daughter of a duke, who cast her off for marrying a penniless ensign in the guards: Mrs. Munford, two daughters, and two sons, both also without a sixpence. These two latter are dangerous rivals, being handsome, and already much admired by the young ladies. Captains Cropsley and Lee; Lords Arthur Tresham, and Lovell; Mr. Selby, Sir Horace Meredith, and two sons of Lady Mortimer, both in the army. Knowing the people who were to be there, told Emily beforehand that I wished her to devote her particular attention, either to Sir Horace Meredith, or Lord Lovell. Our place of destination was Richmond. On leaving Whitehall stairs, my horror may be conceived, when I saw Emily seated at the end of the boat, engaged in earnest conversation with Captain Lee, the youngest of a family of ten children. His father is, indeed, the son of a marquis, but with an income of only two thousand a-year to

educate his large family. Heavens! what I endured — I coughed, I fidgetted, I laughed, I groaned, yet all to no purpose; to use a very odd proverb, "none are so deaf as those that won't hear." The "Star and Garter" was decided upon as the place for dinner, an endroit renowned for pic-nics. Emily and Captain Lee had the start of me, and set off with all expedition towards the house in question. I thought it better not to pursue them, for the heat was intolerable, and pretending to be very much fatigued, begged Sir Horace would give me his arm, which I seized with great earnestness. Emily I praised to the skies, at the same time declaring that Captain Lee was going to be married to my daughter's most particular friend;—it is to be hoped he never will repeat this conversation, as there is not a word of truth in it. At dinner I was seated opposite to Emily, and in vain tried to catch her eye. Addressed Lady Charlotte Stanby, who told me, that Captain Lee was going to India,—heartily wished he was there already. Mrs.

Munford said, in her horrid cunning way, "that it seemed quite an *affaire arrangée* between Captain Lee, and my daughter."

I could have murdered her, but with the utmost presence of mind, I drew myself up, and replied: "My daughter knows her station in life too well, to think of marrying a penniless scamp, Mrs. Munford; therefore, I must request of you not to circulate such foolish reports."

How any thing else went on I cannot say; I had ears and eyes for nothing but my own vexations. Coming home, I made Emily sit between myself and Sir Horace, but she would hardly speak to him. When my head was turned to address Lord Lovell, Sir Horace left his place, and Captain Lee immediately seated himself by Emily, and began singing Italian duets with her; which, as I do not understand the language, might have been replete with tenderness; but whether or no, his eyes sparkled with an expresssion of love, which greatly added to my distress.

On our return home, Emily rushed to her room before I could say a word to her. What my sufferings were on that particular day, none but a chaperon can feel. Retire to bed with the full determination of lecturing her to-morrow on her improper conduct. What will people think of it?

Tuesday. — Had several visitors in the morning, but no Sir Horace Meredith; — I sent him a ticket for the opera to-night. — Lectured Emily well about Captain Lee;—could not continue long, as she never replied, but looked very sulky. — Went in the evening to the opera; — Sir Horace did not come; — hope he is not piqued at Emily's conduct of last night; — several people came into our box, amongst others, Mr. Selby. —Did not mention the party of yesterday, it being rather a sore subject; — cannot help fancying he is in love with Emily; — do not think it is a desirable match; but there is no harm in it, as these little flirtations give éclat to a fashionable girl. — Do not

approve of married men flirting, or unmarried ones flirting with married women. — Left before the ballet began, to go to a ball at Mrs. Stratton's; — the rooms were very hot and crowded; — thank goodness! Captain Lee was not there; had he been, I should have gone distracted. A Mr. Carpenter was introduced to Emily;—I was told, he had come to London to choose a wife; — he has ten thousand pounds a-year, with a very fine place in Yorkshire. How I wish he would take a fancy to Emily! he is not exactly good-looking, but still there is nothing *qui choque.* Emily danced with every one in the room; — thought she never would have stopped. At the desperate hour of five, said, "My dear, do go home; it is so late; the horses have been waiting two hours in the rain, come."

"No, indeed, mamma, only one more Galoppe. I really must dance it, I have been engaged all the evening to Lord Lovell."

On hearing this, waited of course with the utmost patience till every one was gone; — had a violent head-ache and a sore throat, from

sitting in a passage with a window open behind my back; — found that my India shawl, worth fifty guineas, had been stolen from the cloak-room, and was forced to take an old washed English one, which Emily not looking at, said, was just as handsome as my India shawl. *Malheur d'autrui n'est que songe.*

I must here advise all young ladies who wish to be admired, never to stay later than two at a ball in the summer; for after that hour the morning sun appearing, its brilliancy does not well accord, with flushed cheeks, faded dresses and straight ringlets; besides, only inferior men stay after that hour, — people, indeed, that I should not like my daughter to dance with. This notion I could never instil into Emily's head, as she says the "fun of a ball only begins at four in the morning." What an opinion!

Wednesday. — Sore throat no better; — received a note from Sir Horace, saying he was very sorry he could not avail himself of my kind offer last night, as he stayed at Lady C. Stan-

by's till too late for the opera. — Hope to goodness he is not *épris* with Miss Stanby; if so, 'tis Emily's fault for being so rude to him, as many a heart is caught in the rebound. Mr. Selby has just been here: he made a formal declaration to Emily, which she refused; — really felt much for the poor young man, he seemed so distressed; but it is just like her, encouraging at one moment, and rejecting the next. So ill this afternoon, could not go out in the carriage; — Emily went out riding in the park with her cousins; —gave her strict injunctions not to flirt with Captain Lee; but whether she followed the advice or not cannot tell; — she returned in high spirits. — Went so late to Almack's, that our usual place was occupied; — Emily very cross, never considering it was all her fault for being so long dressing. — Sir Horace never quitted Miss Stanby all night, it was remarked by the whole room. I really wonder how people can be so barefaced. — Captain Lee was there; — Emily went on just in the same manner as before with him. When-

ever she saw me coming, she went into the tea-room, or the card-room with Captain Lee; could not follow, owing to the crowd. Two young men in the guards were introduced to us; Captains Fortescue and Granby; — they seemed really to have formed a belle passion for us, as they never left us the whole night ; — they are both good-looking, and the names are good. I have not as yet heard what their fortunes are, but I rather think that Fortescue is a relation of the Herbert family, who are all well off. Thank goodness, the ball was over by three ; — Weippert's band going away at that hour. We took Captain Fortescue and Sir Henry Clifford, home ; — I could not, therefore, lecture Emily on her behaviour. If my throat be not better to-morrow, I really cannot go to Mrs. Cavendish's concert.

Thursday.—Determined not to say any thing about Captain Lee to Emily, as he will soon be off to India ;—obliged to go out early to return visits ; — several cards left in my absence ;

amongst others those of Captains Fortescue and Granby, and Mr. Carpenter; — dined at Lady Caroline Elliott's, and called for Emily to go to the concert at eleven. The dinner party consisted of twenty-four people, too many to be agreeable. Lady Caroline told me, to my great dismay, that Sir Horace had proposed to her friend, Miss Stanby, last night at Almack's, and that he had been accepted. Who would have doubted that the Stanby's would have accepted six thousand a-year? When I made known the marriage to Emily, I could not help scolding her bitterly, for having so foolishly lost such an excellent chance. She answered with the greatest pertness, that she thought she had come to an age when she could judge for herself, and that it was perfectly immaterial to her, who Sir Horace married. This insolence was insufferable, and I made her fully aware of my opinion.—Arrived at Mrs. Cavendish's: Grisi and Rubini were singing a most beautiful duet from Anna Bolena; — Emily was almost instantly surrounded by an idle *côterie* of gay

young men, much to my annoyance; — there was no possibility of getting a chair for love or for money. I had to stand, first resting on one foot, and then on the other, till I was ready to faint from fatigue; so that the beautiful strains of Grisi, Brambillia, Ivanhoff, and Rubini, received with delight by the vast crowd, and encored with reiterated plaudits, gave a prolongation to my miserable torture, and I never was more relieved than when the happy evening was over. — Invited some people for Vauxhall Gardens to-morrow, as Emily is very anxious to see the fireworks of the "Fête de Versailles;" — if they all come, our party will be Lady and Miss Talbot, Lord, Lady, and the Miss Vernons, Mrs. and the Miss Munfords, Lords Lovell, Bruce, and Arthur Tresham, Sir Henry Clifford, Mr. Carpenter, and the two Mr. Talbots; — to assemble at eleven o'clock, and afterwards adjourn to my house for supper, and finish with dancing.

Friday.—Got up, feeling very poorly; — my

face all swollen with a violent tooth-ache, caused by an open window in my bed-room ; — scolded the maid for her carelessness. — Lady Charlotte Stanby called this morning, and did me the honour to inform me of her daughter's intended marriage,— I of course congratulated her with seeming cordiality, all the time wishing herself and her daughter at the bottom of the Red Sea.—Afternoon wet, stayed at home, — Emily fidgetted me to death by running every five minutes to the window to watch the weather, which, fortunately for my peace, cleared up at six o'clock ; — kept our appointment, and were soon joined by our party ; — Emily walked with Lord Lovell ;—divided in two parties, each of which chose which route was most agreeable. Judge of my astonishment, on rejoining the party, to see Emily walking with Captain Lee ! and Lord Lovell with old Mrs. Munford ; how he came there, cannot by any possibility guess : Emily could not surely have asked him ;—bowed to him very coolly, expecting when we entered our carriage he would have withdrawn, but to

my infinite horror, I heard Emily say, "Oh, pray come in, there is plenty of room for you." Near fainting; but obliged to bear all with the utmost resignation. The supper passed off very well; — think a great deal of Champagne was drunk: but that was nothing to me, as Gunter provided hot meat, ice, wine, &c. all for five shillings a-head, — which I think was very reasonable. If managed well, parties are not extravagant. Captains Fortescue, Granby, Greville, and several others, dropped in,—the latter introduced me at Mrs. Cavendish's; a very quiet, handsome, young man;—think Emily is rather taken with him;—hope so, as I like him much better than Captain Lee, whom it would really be impossible for Emily to marry.

The party did not break up till three in the morning;—never saw people dance as they did; — happy to say, Emily was more general than usual in her attentions;—Captain Lee looked very much out of spirits;—can't think why;—did not inquire, for fear of awakening those sensations I would have forgotten;—perhaps it was merely a

lover's quarrel;—I do not approve of the manner in which introductions are made now-a-days. In my time, the gentleman was first introduced to the mother; but in these reforming days, there is a change in every thing, and the daughter takes precedence of the mother.—Heard, much to my surprise to-night, that Captain Greville is married,—it is well I found it out so soon, for it is no use wasting powder and shot, on one already disposed of.

Saturday. — Sadly afraid my health is breaking; — so ill this morning, was obliged to lie in bed till dinner-time; — don't know who called to-day;—Emily had, I believe, a great many visitors.—So worried by her to go to the opera, that I was forced to consent, nevertheless thinking all the time it would be the death of me. What amusement can Emily find in seeing the same opera and the same ballet twice a-week? On entering the box, to my very great surprise, saw Captain Lee established there;—am certain that this morning, when I was in bed, Emily

gave him a ticket;—he sat almost in Emily's lap;—am certain she never heard a word of the opera, she was so taken up with his conversation.—So ill, really could not stop this horrid exposure;—begged Emily would come away before the ballet was ended, which she assented to, to my very great astonishment;— entering my bed-room, threw myself quite exhausted on the sofa, and turning round, beheld Emily on a chair by my side. Before I could ask her the cause of her unusual presence, she thus spoke: "You must be almost aware of what I am going to tell you: Captain Lee proposed to me to-night, and I have accepted him." I shrieked out with surprise. "My dear mamma," she continued, "pray do not vex yourself about this,—remember what is done, cannot be undone; besides, why should you dislike my marrying Henry. Poverty is no disgrace, and if that is the only fault you can find with him, that is soon cleared away; he has two thousand pounds a-year, and I am sure that is enough for any one to live very happily upon." "If that is your opinion,

my dear Emily, I shall say no more about the matter; all I hope is, you will not verify the proverb, 'Marry in haste, and repent at leisure.'"

How thankful I was to hear Captain Lee had two thousand pounds a-year, and what a weight was taken off my mind, the reader may readily conceive. The money, I have since learned, was left him by an old aunt, whose god-son he was. It is strange this important news had not been communicated to me. What have I not done to prevent this match, which really, now that I have learned all the particulars, will not turn out so badly.

My chief object in life is ended. All my daughters are married, some better than others; but still it is a great thing to have gained six men for one family. The task I have accomplished was an arduous one; but I have succeeded without money, in doing what many cannot, that have that luxury in their possession; showing thereby, that beauty will carry the palm sometimes over wealth. The excitement

my feelings have laboured under, when engaged in any difficult plot, has caused me many a sleepless night, and my strong constitution has naturally suffered. Mental agony has, perhaps, for a time disturbed the equanimity of my temper; but those for whom I have thus laboured, must excuse it, as it was in their cause. The success I have had is entirely owing to the amiability and personal charms of my daughters; for never in any instance, have I found the relations of my deceased husband, or self, say a good word in my favour, or lend a helping hand when in their power so to do; on the contrary, it was always cited against me as very extraordinary, if I performed any wonderful *coup de main.*

The week is ended.—I leave it now to the judgment of my young friends to say, if I have not been an admirable chaperon. Let them bear in mind the heat, the fatigue, the exertions, I have gone through; the vexations, the trials, the anxieties, I have undergone; the cutting

speeches, the sneers, the impertinences that have been addressed to me, enough to sour the milk of human kindness,—and then decide.

I lay down my pen, fully satisfied I have performed the highly responsible duties of a mother, better than most people. Emily might, or might not, have made a better marriage. I am certain of one thing, that

> "Il y a de bons mariages,
> Mais, il n'y en a point de delicieux."

THE ALMACK'S GALOPPE,

BY

CAROLINE FREDERICA BEAUCLERK.

Momentary as sound,
Swift as a shadow, short as any dream.
SHAKSPEARE.

Now Weippert's harp each youthful breast inspires,
A space is clear'd, the dancers take their ground,
Each dancing beau claims her he most admires—
With pleasure here all youthful hearts rebound.

But see, the galoppe's graceful, joyous strain,
Makes the red rose mount high in beauty's cheeks,
Old damsels round for partners hunt in vain,
Th' unrivall'd one his favour'd fair one seeks.

Enchanting dance!—the growth of German land—
At thy gay signal fairy feet are flying;
Soft vows are made, and broke, as hand in hand
The dancers rush in speed each other vying.

Let's mark the num'rous vot'ries of this dance:—
L—— first rushes like a headstrong filly,
Cranstoun and Walpole may be said to prance,
Smith's so, so,—and ditto, Baron Bille.

E'en envy now is mute at Erskine's grace,
While Hillsborough a Hercules advances;
Who can cease gazing on Alicia's face,
Till Blackwood smiles, or Fanny Brandling dances.

St. John,—sweet Maynard,—pretty Stanhope glide,
And lively Hill, inciting gentle Karr,
Meade and Regina ambling side by side,
In dancing this, are all much on a par.

Oh! now observe, Maude, Littleton, and Brooke,
Flowers so pure, you'd deem from heav'n they fell,
While N—t—n, queen-like in her very look,
Would make a desert bliss,—a heav'n of hell.

Desperate rush a band of raw recruits,
With ardent minds, and no regard to time—
I beg their pardon, but they are such brutes,
They must excuse my writing such a line.

Hark! a sound as if from a percussion,
Follow'd by piercing shrieks, arouse our fears;
Chaperons rise alarm'd, and dread concussion—
A prostrate beauty is dissolv'd in tears.

Think not the prospects of the night are turn'd,
For a bright vision glances in the ring;
No sooner is he seen, than all are spurn'd,
They seem his subjects,—he appears their king.

* * * * in whom the gift of dancing lies,
For graceful ease none can with him compare,
"Swift as an arrow from the shaft he flies"—
Envied by men, and worshipp'd by the fair.

See him, like the forked lightning flashing,
No ear can catch the sound of his footfall,
Down the room the gallant * * * dashing,
The pride of Almack's—darling of a ball.

All things at length must cease, and so must this;
I'll end what bumpkins call the gallopade;
Sweet unmeant speeches pass from Miss to Miss,
All go to flirt, drink tea, and lemonade.

The galoppe's ended, so my lay must stop;
As a finale I propose to sing,
(While love-sick beaux, to belles the question pop),
With loyal heart and voice—Long live the King!

LAY OF THE SPANISH MAIDEN.

BY

HENRIETTA MARY BEAUCLERK.

THE moon was up, the night was bright and clear,
Sleep had long closed the eyes of all around,
When at a casement, quick a maid appears,
And from her lips proceed the following sound:—

"Why tarriest thou, belov'd one of my heart,
"There's none around that thou need'st surely fear;
"Oh, cruel fate! that we should ever part,
"For Zora knows no joy, when thou'rt not here."

She paus'd, and clasp'd her trembling hands on high,
Two pearly tears descended from her eyes,
And long she wept and heaved many a sigh,
For none when griev'd remember how time flies.

When, suddenly the moon became o'ercast,
And all around foretold a coming storm,
The light'ning flash'd, the rain descended fast,
The billows toss'd and heav'd in angry form.

The lake, till then, whose waters seem'd like glass,
Appear'd of one accord to foam on high;
But Zora, gazing on this swelling mass,
Knew not her lover's bark was floating nigh.

At length the wind was lull'd, appeas'd, and still,
The rain soon ceasing, usher'd in the morn,
Faint rays of light now deck'd the neigh'bring hill,
And nought had suffer'd by the last night's storm.

But though this fearful gale was hush'd and past,
Zora stood fix'd in sad and mute despair,
A shade for ever o'er her mind was cast—
That mind once stor'd with mirth and virtue rare.

With piercing shrieks, she bends her streaming eyes,
To where a form lay stretch'd upon the sand,
To call life back within that breast she tries—
In vain, for never more breath'd Ferdinand!

"IL EST MARIE."

A ROMANCE, BY

HENRIETTA MARY BEAUCLERK.

La paix est bannie de mon âme,
Et je ne puis trouver aucune calme;
Des larmes arrosent mes joues fannés,
Car l'auteur de mes maux, est "Marié!"

Et quand le sommeil firme mes yeux,
Le repos fuit, au souvenir affreux,
Une voie secréte me dit—"Pleurez!"
Celui qui cause tes peines est "Marié!"

LINES TO MY SISTER.

BY

HENRIETTA MARY BEAUCLERK.

Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair,
Thee all things living gaze on.

MILTON.

ART thou some sylph descended from above,
To fire the breast of man with hope and love;
And when their hearts they'll offer unto thee,
Wilt raise thy hidden wings, and quickly flee?

If so, bright fay, depart ere harm is done,
Nor in these lands again, I pray thee, come;
If as a mortal thou would'st deign to dwell,
Cast off that form, and all will then be well.

But she, who now before me radiant stands,
Is not a being of the fairy lands;
And, though her form is slight, her features fair,
She still is not created out of air.

JOURNAL OF A DEBUTANTE.

BY

CAROLINE FREDERICA BEAUCLERK.

A notorious characteristic of our English society is the universal *marketing* of our unmarried women—a marketing peculiar to ourselves in Europe, and only rivalled by the slave-merchants of the East. A spirit of insincerity is thus encouraged among all women;—it is not talent, it is not virtue. It is not even the graces and fascination of manners that are sought by the fair dispensers of social reputation: No, it is the Title and the Rent-roll!

BULWER'S *England*.

JOURNAL OF A DEBUTANTE.

I AM the youngest of five daughters and three sons. My mother gloried that her four eldest girls had all married men with large fortunes, and descendants of noble families, thanks to her unwearied exertions, and wonderful talents as chaperon! My eldest brother married a banker's daughter. My mother took care that her daughters should marry into noble families; but, as she said, a man raised his wife to his own level in society — *l'argent comptant* was all that was required in my sister-in-law.

I must now state the position of my family, when I went through the ordeal of being introduced into le beau monde. My father, Horace

Vernon, was a country gentleman of very small fortune, who married my mother, because the daughter of a duke; whilst she herself, without fortune, was fearful of becoming an old maid. This union passed in the world for a happy *ménage*. Each exhibited a sort of peaceful contentment, on the philosophical principle of "What cannot be cured, *must* be endured." During eighteen years, they lived in seclusion, when my mother, Lady Elinor, judged it expedient to exchange Bury Hall for a town mansion: — then broke forth her wonderful genius, her unfailing talent as chaperon; then it was she displayed the collected force of her faculties, and put in action a whole artillery of manœuvres. My four sisters danced at every ball with all the elder sons, and made *les beaux yeux* in every tableau. To make use of a sporting phrase, Lady Elinor succeeded in having a sure find, and having had a splendid run, bagged her foxes. To be sure, the husband of my fourth sister, may be said to have been run to ground and dug out, for my mother deemed it

expedient to send my brother to ask the Honourable James Montague, that awful question of "Pray what are your intentions?" &c.

By the time I was sixteen, Lady Elinor was looked upon with affright, by the elder sons, and with detestation by the younger brothers,—a race she held in horror. Caligula said, "Oh, that the Romans had but one neck!" that he might put them to death all at once, and I am certain my mother would have wished this to have been the case, with all the detrimentals. On bringing me out, she requested, I should find a good *parti* with the greatest possible expedition, as the funds of the family were at such a very low ebb, that next season we should have to vegetate in the country. With the agreeable prospect before me, of either marrying some booby, or of living at Bury Hall, the very thoughts of which gave me *une crispation des nerfs*, I went to my first ball with my mother's consolatory assurance, that I possessed more means of making conquests, than any girl going.

To satisfy the curiosity of my readers, I must

now give a description of my personal appearance. *Sans trancher le mot,* I was thought very beautiful; in justice, I must add, that I was reckoned prettier than I am in reality, for I have *une figure chiffonée,* which strikes every beholder; this, I attribute to a pair of almond-shaped blue eyes. My figure was slight and elegant, and I dressed to perfection. Unlike mamma, none could accuse *me* of ever running after the men. I was very lively, and had plenty of ready wit, which was a sufficient cause for my being much abused by most young ladies.

Here I would observe, that I do not consider freedom of expression, and frankness of manner, proofs of an ill-regulated mind or heart. A girl may be witty, and not immodest—volatile, yet pure and chaste; and from my soul I believe "there is little virtue in a prude."

Holding these tenets, I heeded not the unkind speeches which reached my ears,—such as, "That girl has such a *ton de garnison,*—a word for every man;" "That Julia Vernon is a tre-

mendous flirt; the gentlemen call her pretty, but I do not admire that dashing style of dress, unlike all of *us*," &c. I have remarked, that singularity in dress is never forgiven, be the offender man or woman. Hence those models of propriety, those Misses clad in sober hues, in home-made robes, "so proper and precise," are always reckoned such "very nice people." No greater dowdy exists, than an English genuine, "*charming woman.*"

I shall now, for the instruction and edification of young *débutantes*, give an extract from my journal, in the month of July, the height and meridian of a London season. Oh, happy time! when every body seems to have taken leave of his senses. Balls, breakfasts, and operas—beauty, riches, and coronets—love, jealousy, and passion, are surely enough to make the young *débutante* lose both her head and heart.

Such was my case: for a month I lived in a perpetual whirl of amusement and dissipation; in the mean time, as may be expected with a

girl so popular as I was, I had plenty of lovers; but mamma thought I might look higher than to form an alliance with a commoner: she did not, therefore, encourage any of my *soupirans*.

Things remained in this state, till I became acquainted with Charles Stuart: in a word, he appeared just the beau ideal which my girlish fancy had pictured to itself for a husband. But now, as those youthful visions of hope and joy are fled as a dream, let me once more call to my mind his deep-toned voice—let me dwell on the form of the only man I ever loved—ay, loved, idolized, with my whole heart and soul. Let me call to my remembrance the features I have delighted to gaze upon,—of one who possessed "the glass of fashion, and the mould of form." Yes; let me indulge in my weakness, or rather madness, and though now painful as it is to my throbbing heart, to write of one it is a sin to love, yet I have courage to perform the task.

Oh, Stuart! Stuart! I can never forget thee. Time rolls on, still I think on thee, and the

thought is madness! Oh, why did not death snatch me away, and thus have saved me years of mental anguish! but this gnawing grief at the heart, it does not kill. Ah, no; I linger on my weary existence day by day;—surely it is a mockery of woe, to lead a life of heartless dissipation, when the brightest hope has fled, aye and for ever.

JOURNAL.

Monday, 4th July.—I was at a ball at Lady Clifford's, when, dancing a quadrille with some spooney, to whose platitudes I turned a deaf ear, I overheard one gentleman say to another:

"Who is that very pretty girl?" The answer was, "It is the all beautiful, the all charming Julia Vernon."

The gentleman who first asked the question, begged to be introduced to me. Lord Montreville undertook to form our acquaintance.

"Fair Julia," said his lordship, "you make

fresh conquests every night; here is the handsomest man in London *épris* with you."

When I first looked at Charles Stuart, I felt gratified that I attracted the attention of so *distingué'd* looking an individual. I sank beneath the ardent glance of his dark eyes.

"At length, Miss Vernon," said he, "the moment for which I have so long panted is arrived."

Lady Georgiana Clinton, who was literally pounding down the middle and up again in a galoppe, at this instant nearly knocked me down, vociferating loudly, "Oh, why don't you dance, it is so delicious, I am quite mad!"

I danced this galoppe with Charles Stuart, and I may state, that I was as mad with delight as Lady Georgiana, though I did not evince my insanity so boisterously. Mamma insisted on coming home early, as she said with a mysterious air, "*il est parti.*"

Oh heavens! why was I such a fool, as to dance with Lord Montreville three times to-

night. My motive, I own, was to ask him questions relative to "the handsome Stuart," as he is called. When at home, I was so restless and uneasy, I did not know what was the matter with me. I alternately looked at a carnation which Charles Stuart had given me on leaving the ball-room, and on my ball-dress, with an air of complacency, murmuring to myself—He certainly is handsomer than any man I know; but it is not the beauty and regularity of his features that charms me; no, nor those eyes. It is that open, frank, ingenuous look he has:—melancholy, I should say, was the prevailing character of his face. But when he smiles, what a radiant sun-like smile it is! Thus, thus, was I filling a cup of misery for myself, the very dregs of which I have since drained. I went to bed, my head aching, my heart throbbing—and when I slept, I dreamed of Stuart.

Tuesday, the 5th.—Were engaged to go to Lady Montresor's breakfast at Putney. I found

all the people very *fade et ennuyeux*. The young ladies actually seemed tied to their mammas; and kept pacing like the ghost in Tom Thumb, "up, up, up," and "down, down, down," on a gravel walk, to the destruction of satin shoes, and under the influence of a broiling sun in the dog-days. I have no doubt but that mamma is delighted to see that Lord Montreville admires me; but with her usual policy, she pretends not to observe it. To effect this, she put up with all the horrible vapid *bêtisses* of Captain Fergusson, and giving me the slip, down an avenue of a mile long, set off with him *au grand galop*, leaving me alone with Lord Montreville.

This last-named nobleman is not deficient in good looks; but he is very fat, and has a high colour in his cheeks, which is a thing I detest in a man. Well; we walked about. Lord Montreville, I am sure, found me very dull, for having had him a long time on hand, I had exhausted every topic. He kept saying to me, "Come, Miss Vernon, say something clever!

when you like it you are such a deuced nice girl." Here I must observe, that nothing so effectually stops my mouth as any body begging of me to say something "clever;" it makes me feel *d'une ignorance crasse*, and as if I had not one idea of my own. Thus we dawdled on till dinner-time,—I boring poor Lord Montreville with the *réfrain* of, "Where can mamma have hid herself?" a regular young lady's question, by the way, when she is looking for some one more congenial to her taste than the beau she is inflicted with;—such was my situation. At last I said, "I do not see *that* Mr. Stuart here to-day."

"Oh, I dare say," replied his lordship, maliciously, "if he had known that Miss Gray had been here, he would have come."

I instantly saw that envy prompted him to say this; I therefore answered, with apparent nonchalance, "Pray, which Miss Gray is his ladye-love?"

"Hang me if I know or care," replied Lord

Montreville, hardly listening to me; "probably, the little red-haired one."

I really could have boxed his ears for his impertinent stupidity; but keeping the usual equanimity of my temper, added, "People generally admire by contrast." With my ordinary quickness at reading people's minds, I instantly read in Lord Montreville's, that he was jealous of Charles Stuart; and that he wishes to be as much the soul's delight of every one, as he is the delight of his own. At length, like two weary footpads, we reached the house. A general move amongst the company,—chaperons getting animated,—a sparkling in old, and also in young gentlemen's eyes, and trains of lovers seen pouring from dark groves, where no doubt many a heart had been wooed and won, indicated that all the assemblage were repairing to commit carnivorous and graminivorous devastation. We followed a file of hungry people, looking as if playing at the game of hen and chickens. Lord Montreville ate, I do think, a

gallon of white soup; the champaign flowed *en ruisseau*, and seemed to have any thing but a soporific effect upon him, as the flattering communication, that I was an angel, with sundry amorous effusions, were the effects I witnessed thereof. Mamma pretending not to see us, seemed quite taken up with Captain Fergusson, —a most useful man, much patronized by chaperons. He was their victim, who would run from one end of the colonnade to the other for their carriages after the opera, in a drenching night. He was ugly, and considered a very *safe* man.

Just at this time Weippert's band struck up a galoppe; the contrast struck me forcibly of my delightful partner of the night before, and the gluttonous and unromantic mastication of Lord Montreville, devouring a plateful of cutlets and green peas.

"I perceive," said his lordship, "that Fergusson means to ask you to dance, but I look upon you as engaged to me."

Now, between the two evils I instantly de-

cided in my mind that I had better pair off with Lord Montreville than with Fergusson: in the first place I thought it would satisfy mamma, for I dreaded the solitary drive homeward, when I had been guilty of any little incipient flirtation with my favourite younger brothers. In the second instance, Fergusson literally *spoons* the galoppe, with his foot pointed like a dancing-master. Lord Montreville, who I suspect was suffering from indigestion, which I do not at all wonder at, was so blown, that he begged to stop almost immediately; he said, "You do take one at such a pace,—you'll be the death of me. By Jove," continued Lord Montreville, with visible alteration in his face and voice, "if there isn't Stuart, as large as life."

My eyes involuntarily followed the direction his lordship's took, and I saw Mr. Stuart leaning against the door, with his large, dark, lovely, lustrous, eyes, gazing full upon me. My heart beat, till I thought it must burst. To disguise my agitation, I nearly laughed myself into hysterics at one of Lord Montreville's puns, to

whom I civilly remarked, "Pray, go and ask Lady Georgiana to dance; she is such a love of a girl,—you must be sick to death of me."

"Upon my honour, Miss Vernon," replied he, "you are too bad; I know you are dying to get rid of me, that you may dance with that fellow, Stuart. But what will Lady Elinor say? Oh, Julia! I wish to Heaven you had some of your mother's pride! It strikes me, to be a favourite of yours, one must have one hundred pounds per annum, *pour tout potage;* good God! how lean I should get upon that!"

Lord Montreville so engrossed me, that I could only give Charles Stuart a look, as much as to say,—Your turn next; nothing lasts for ever. With the reflection of *ce qui est différé, n'est pas perdu,* for my consolation, I submitted to be dragged round and round till the end of the galoppe. We then went into the refreshment room, where Lord Montreville was soon engaged in drinking coffee, and eating bread and butter: in the meantime Mr. Stuart

came up, and begged the honour of my hand for the next dance;—so I slipped off.

Good heaven! that such a difference *could* exist between two men,—Charles Stuart, so gentle and engaging in his manners,—so noble and generous in his sentiments,—so high-minded in his notions,—and Lord Montreville, without one grain of sense in his head. Ah! *Il faut être folle pour aimer un fou!*

Returning home, mamma said, "Thank goodness, I have done my duty, and Captain Fergusson is ended for the day; positively, I had to hook the man into a corner, and put my chair right before him, to prevent him asking you to dance, which he kept threatening to do; I have been much pleased with Lord Montreville this day."

"Oh pray, mamma," interrupted I, "spare me, I am sick to death of him; I am sure I am quite tired of hearing him talk about his eternal waistcoats, and the French polish on his boots!"

"My dear," rejoined Lady Elinor angrily,

"when you are Lady Montreville, it will not signify to you whether he wears a *strait waist-coat*, or goes barefooted; the thing is, to make him 'pop the question.'"

"Oh, mamma," I said, "does it not behove a wife to *honour* her husband? and, really, I despise Lord Montreville. If you consult my happiness, suffer me to marry a man I can *love*."

"My dear Julia," answered my mother, "I am convinced the happiest marriages are those dispassionate ones, when the parties joined in wedlock bear nothing more than a reasonable regard for each other. They should be affluent, have each their separate course of amusements, and see each other rarely; for absence is the only salt that preserves matrimony from cloying. Swift says, 'Married people, for being so closely united are but the apter to part, as knots, the harder they are pulled, break the sooner.' For myself, I hold all love as mere sensualism, and view protestations of mutual and eternal adoration as ravings. I am quite of Dr. Johnson's opinion, that 'It is always a weak man who

falls in love.' 'Tis beyond man's might to love, and at the same time to retain wisdom; the passion of love is folly in a man; it amounts to indelicacy in a woman. I was extremely displeased at your leaving Lord Montreville to-night, to dance with that puppy, Mr. Stuart. What could induce you to commit such an unpardonable *gauchérie;* and who is this Mr. Stuart?"

"He is the grandson," I replied, "of the Marquis of Brandon."

"Good God!" vociferated my mother, "a set of beggars! there really ought to be an Act of Parliament issued against such tigers, monopolizing the time and attention of a fashionable girl."

Lady Elinor's parting words for the night, were, "I flatter myself we have *jockeyed* his lordship." As for me, I burst into a flood of tears, and wept till I thought my heart would break. All that I could give utterance to, was, "Oh, how heartily do I wish that every one had a competency of four thousand a-year, then there

would be no angering of fathers and mothers, no breaking of girls' hearts, no family dissensions, and very few unhappy marriages!"

Wednesday.—Coming down this morning, found Lord Montreville, Captain Cleveland, and a whole battalion in the drawing-room with my mother, who said, "Here read this letter from that old quiz, Lady Trimleston; she gives a party at Richmond this week."

The note, which I read out loud, ran thus:—"Miss Brown is deputed by Lady Trimleston, to express her regrets that Lady E. Vernon cannot assist her in looking over her visiting list this morning, for the purpose of asking the company to Lady Trimleston's *dejeuné à la fourchette*, on Thursday next. Lady Trimleston encloses two dozen of blank cards, in case Miss Vernon should feel disposed to ask any *eligible* men."

"Who is Miss Brown?" asked Lord Montreville.

"Oh, a dreadful woman, or rather old maid," replied mamma, "she lives at the antipodes, up

in Baker Street, and being poor, is too happy to play *la complaisante* to Lady Trimleston, who being a foreigner does not understand the English language."

"Whatever you do," added I, "studiously avoid becoming acquainted with Miss Brown; there never existed a more spiteful and malicious woman; never having been able to make a match for herself, she tries and breaks them for others. She wishes every one to think her *a dear little thing*, which you cannot reconcile yourself to, for she is like a grenadier in petticoats. She is at daggers drawn with me, for the vulgar creature once told me, that she did not think *small beer* of herself; of course not, I replied, for you are *brown stout*."

"Does she go about?" asked Lord Montreville.

"Yes," replied mamma, "she goes to the ancient musical concerts, and appears at Almack's in a *Barége* gown, the night before the Derby, generally denominated 'The refuge for the destitute.'"

"I once waltzed with her in Dublin, where I was quartered last summer," chimed in Captain Cleveland, "and she flounced about so, to make herself appear young, that she finished by giving me such a tremendous *coup de pied*, that I thought she must have broken the small bone of my leg. This made me look at the width and breadth of her foot, which, to use a vulgar, but expressive phrase, was a complete *beetle squasher*."

"My goodness! Captain Cleveland," cried I, "what an opportunity she gave you to say, 'If you love me, tell me so, but do not kick me.'"

"Love her!" exclaimed the young Captain, with a shriek of horror, "why, the woman is just like a laughing hyena!"

"She puts me more in mind," I replied, "of an ogress; those long front teeth of her's, seem admirably calculated to perforate holes in the flesh of human beings, and suck their blood!"

"I am *au desespoir*," said mamma, "that I was too much knocked up this morning to look over her visiting list, for when she asks the

company for Lady Trimleston, they are such a set of odd people."

"Quite tag rag, and bobtail," added Lord Monteville.

"This London life kills me," continued Lady Elinor, "and next week I must begin to think of packing up, and enjoying a little calm at Bury Hall," giving Lord Montreville a look, which meant, "if you intend to propose, be not a century in doing it."

When Lord Montreville had departed, I went to Mrs. Somerton's, to rehearse with her daughters a *charade* they were getting up. This lady has earned the reputation of being the greatest fortune-hunter in London; she does bold strokes for husbands, but she does not perform them with that finish which distinguishes mamma's efforts. The difference between the two may be better understood, when I state, that a gentleman once remarked, that Lady Elinor's *manœuvring* was like Sir Thomas Lawrence's painting, whilst that of Mrs. Somerton, resembled more Stanfield's scenic paintings at the

theatres. She had three very pretty daughters, and she moved heaven and earth to get them married, which was easier said than done, for Caroline Somerton, the eldest, as her mother told me, was very headstrong, and would not listen to reason. She had taken it into her head to flirt with a young life-guardsman, a Captain Damer, and I believe matters had come to a proposal. Mrs. Somerton declared she should never marry such a scamp; Caroline, however, replied, "Where there's a will, there's a way."

We went to Almack's at night. I am come to the conclusion that these are the pleasantest balls in London; a fresh and elegant dress shines there, and not having to go through the fatigue of making *de fausses complimens*, you are much more independent.

Lord Montreville said that I was the prettiest girl in the room, which pleased mamma so much, that she bestowed on him that much used expression, "I am sure you are very good."

I am not surprised at a London ball-room

striking foreigners with admiration. The patrician and courtly bearing of the high-born ladies of fashion, and the aristocratic thorough-bred look of their daughters, bear away the palm from every other country. I admit that when an Englishwoman is *ugly*, it is to a surpassing degree. I wish my pretty countrywomen would reform both their style of dress, and their mode of dancing. The subject of female dress has been deemed important enough to be commented on by Addison, and many other learned men. Sir Philip Sidney maintained that "the comeliness of the clothes, depends on the comeliness of the body." Julius Cæsar passed an edict, forbidding unmarried women wearing jewels. Female attire has now no such guardians; *fashion* rules all with despotic sway. If sleeves resembling balloons are in vogue, the Brobdignac of five feet nine, and the Liliputian of four feet odd, wear them the same size. Why should not every lady have a style of dress of her own, instead of adopting that system of uniformity which exists in a London ball-room?

Every chaperon is seen dressed in the "regulation" satin robe, with the ordinary accompaniment of a velvet, or crape hat, and feathers. The young ladies all dressing so much alike, give a *salon de danse* the appearance of a large national school.

Let ladies, who wish for becoming and *récherché* dresses, imitate the elegance and grace displayed in the toilettes of Mademoiselle Mars-Leontine, Fay, and Madame Vestris. But let them beware of seeking their models from the *English* stage, though this was done formerly. I have been told that Mrs. Abingdon was besieged by ladies of rank for the pattern of her gowns, &c.; Abingdon caps were adopted, *en fureur*. Since then, it seems, a change has taken place, and youth, talent, elegance of deportment, and chasteness of dress, are at a discount.

Fanny Kemble has retired from the stage, and we no longer possess at either of the national, or at any of the minor theatres, a Juliet, a Beatrice, a Lady Teazle, a Lady Macbeth, or a Bianca. The same lamentable fact is

visible amongst the actors:—there is not now a Romeo to be seen for love or money! Neither is there any one capable of personating young Mirable, Lord Townly, Charles Surface, &c.

The singers are decidedly increasing and improving, for we can boast of Mrs. and Mr. Wood, Misses Romer, Sheriff, and H. Cawse, Messrs H. Philips, Templeton, Barker, Collins, Wilson, and Balfe—all agreeable singers, and fitting in personal appearance to act the parts of heroes and heroines.

As for the dancing, reform it altogether. Oh! why will not mothers *force* their daughters to learn battemens and glissades, and make them *plié chassé—pas bourré, &c.*, to work out the English stiffness, and to give them a little *abandon* in their gait. The confidential quadrille, the inspiring galoppe, the fascinating Ionian valtz, the seducing mazourka, and the coquettish cotillon, have, I am aware, been condemned by the English, as romps. But is it necessary, that a young girl should resemble her great grand mother;—or is a young man expected to

be a petrifaction? I have heard many times, that light heels denote a light head. This theory I hold as quite unmeaning, and ridiculous. Tradition tells us that Socrates, the greatest of all philosophers, joined in the amusement of dancing. I, who put my whole heart and soul into the galoppe, that most delightful of all dances, am quite grieved to see the *indolent* way, in which it is danced in England; really, the manner in which some of them *hop* in it, is disheartening. As I was following a great fat girl, who, to use a masculine expression, was a regular *jack* of a woman, I over heard one of that numerous genius, y'clept *toadies*, exclaim to the chaperon of the *jack:*—

"What a difference there is between your charming daughter, and that little mad thing Miss Vernon,—what a romp she makes of this dance, floating about like a *Bayadère*, and dressed unlike every one else, even to her shoes. My goodness! look at them!"

I glanced my eyes from my own foot, *chaussé, par parenthèse,* in Le Saunier's best, to the

"*understanding*" of my rival,—something resembling a cow's hoof, in a pair of shoes, the price of which I should conclude was five shillings and sixpence. Mamma was very angry with me, because I preferred dancing, to staying with Lord Montreville, who sat by her all night. Another civil speech I overheard, was, "Lord Montreville has been sitting in Lady Elinor's pocket the whole night. I suppose she is trying to catch him, for that flirting girl of hers." I turned sharp round, and discovered my friend in Miss Brown. I could have beat her black and blue, but merely stared her full in the face, and gave a dead cut:—really the impertinence of this woman is past endurance.

After a most delightful galoppe with Charles Stuart, we were repairing to the tea-room, when I saw Lord Montreville following me.—I pretended not to see him, but quietly seated myself, and began sipping a very hot cup of tea, a very good excuse, by the way, when you wish to have a good flirting bout, when to my great horror and dismay, Lord Montreville came and

placed himself between Mr. Stuart and myself. After looking at me with the eye of a basilisk, he said:—

"Pray Miss Vernon, am I to understand that Mr. Stuart has supplanted me; for since you have known him, you avoid me, as you would contagion."

I answered with a voice tremulous through shame and vexation: "May I ask, my lord, by what right you thus question me?—Mr. Stuart," continued I, rising, "will you return with me into the ball-room, and take me to my mother?"

"On my soul," burst forth the indignant Lord Montreville, "you shall not go with him." At the same time grasping my arm, with a hand of iron.

"Pray, pray," I cried, "unloose me! Mr. Stuart, do not go; pray assist me. Lord Montreville, what right have you thus to insult me? I demand you to unhand me!"

Mr. Stuart then said, "You surely cannot wish to detain Miss Vernon by force."

"I beg you will not dictate to me," returned

his lordship, haughtily. "Miss Vernon, say you forgive me," continued he, as he saw me ready to faint through shame and terror: "will you have a glass of water?" he cried, in the greatest alarm.

More dead than alive, I replied, "Your conduct has been, Lord Montreville, most unprovoked, and ungentlemanlike. It is your absence alone that can set all to rights." Here my heroism could support me no longer, and I burst into tears;—they both seemed shocked and amazed.

"My dear Miss Vernon," cried Lord Montreville, "pray do not cry; I cannot bear to see a woman weep. Take a little water—pray do not cry, my dear creature, every one is looking at you."

When you say to a child, "Pray don't cry, darling," it is a signal for him to burst forth with renewed vigour. Such was my case—the more Lord Montreville said, "don't cry," the more I wept, and sobbed, as if my heart was breaking, so mortified and ashamed did I feel at

the whole affair; and at hearing people around me say, "What *is* the matter?" what is it?" A general murmur had informed mamma, that I was *prima donna* in a *scena:* when I saw her, I greeted her in a Siddon's tone, with, "Take me away—take me away!"

She could not conceive what had happened, but thought it best to take me down stairs: in her heart she must have rejoiced in it, as Lady Sopwell, Mrs. Crampton, and two or three notorious *commères,* craned their necks to catch a look at my face, saying, "May we congratulate you, Lady Elinor?—It is very natural she should be overcome, poor thing!" &c. &c.

Mamma did not contradict their supposition, but was whispering to Lord Montreville, who followed, looking like a naughty child. Mr. Stuart had got the carriage for us, into which Lord Montreville handed me like a Niobe all in tears.

"For goodness sake! what has happened!" cried my mother, as we drove off. "Has Lord Montreville spoken out like a man? Has he proposed? Speak, child—I have had enough

of heroics and scenes to night." I then explained the cause of my tears, upon which, she coolly replied,—"I should be extremely angry with you, but, that I think it may bring matters to a crisis. I am convinced he loves you, in which case, I do not wonder at his being jealous of that horrid Stuart, to whom you could not make yourself more agreeable, had he twenty thousand a-year!" To this maternal lecture I could return no answer.—Alas! I could not help loving one, bereft of title or fortune.

The next morning Mr. Stuart called, but he had hardly seated himself a minute, before mamma said,—"I am going to do a very rude thing Mr. Stuart, and that is, to turn you out of my house—(putting on a forced laugh,) "as we are on the point of setting out to a *dejeuné*." When he was gone she remarked, "I cannot suffer my drawing-room, to become a refuge for penniless scamps. Heigho!" continued she, "I hope to God you will marry Lord Montreville—that will be a great charge off my mind. Good heavens! no one can form a conception

of the exertion and anxiety I went through to get your sisters off. But how successful I was! Men, will laugh, talk, dance — ay, make love to a girl, but how difficult is it to make them propose! Even Mary's husband — ugly, hunch-backed creature as he is—did I not risk my own son's life to frighten him into marrying her?"

"Ah, poor Mary!" said I, "*what* a man you made her marry!"

"Therefore, Julia, ought you not to be thankful, when I work like a galley slave to get such a man as Lord Montreville for you;—who, besides being the eldest son of an earl, with a clear thirty thousand a-year, is straight, and as men go, is not deficient in good looks?"

"Spare me, on that subject," said I, shuddering, "it makes me sick."

"It makes *me* sick!" rejoined she, fiercely, "to see you whining and pining, when I am moving heaven and earth, to gain such a prize —such a prospect for you! But Julia, let us understand each other—I have not yet told you the dreadful, appalling state of destitution we

are in. I have not yet told you, that this house, has, at this very moment, an execution in it—that Bury Hall is mortgaged to thrice its value—that your father has fled the country, and left his wife and children beggars! You are also unaware, that the necklace of gems you wore last night, my jewels, the plate, horses, and carriages, have all been taken from us, to satisfy our merciless creditors. Do not gasp for breath, prepare yourself for more terrible things. Now hear me, Julia: solemnly swear before God and you, that no other shall win and wear you but Lord Montreville.—You start, ungrateful girl! I have sworn it, and I will not retract one jot. Nay, weep not—tears are useless: look at me—do I weep, Julia!" continued she, as she gazed fixedly on me. "If I thought but for one moment, nay, if I only dreamt that you loved Stuart, I—even I—your mother, who till now have been your dearest, best friend, would cast you from my bosom, as I would a viper.—Ah!" she screamed, as with terrific force she pulled me towards her—"am I right; you sought to

deceive *me*—to make *me* your dupe—you *love him!* Hell and madness! is it even so?—Gracious powers! that I should be plunged, headlong as it were, into such a gulf of misery. Fool! fool!" continued she, pacing the room in great excitement, "would you deprive yourself of the very bread you eat, which you would, if you married Stuart. But, no; sooner than that should be, I would follow you to your grave, a cold and stiffened corpse. But," cried she, with renewed energy, "if you would give yourself wholly up to your disgraceful sensual passion, you will at least feel the reward of a good conscience, when you see us in beggary, and in want. Yes; you will praise your own generous feelings, and say, 'twas I who took the bread from their mouths! 'twas I who dashed the cup of water from their parched lips! 'twas I, you will continue, in exultation at your fine feelings, who turned them adrift in their old age!—'twas nobly done! But what shall *we* say? *We* shall bestow heavy, deep *curses* on our ungrateful child."

"No, no, no," cried I, in an agony, "not curses; do not curse me! Oh, my mother, spurn me not,—have pity on your child."

"Could you ask our blessing?" said she, "No, I say; our curses should lie at your door. If you hate *me*, at least show some milk of human kindness to your aged, infirm father, whose pilgrimage in this world of sorrows will soon be over. Oh, God! what a serpent's tooth is a thankless child!"

Here she threw herself upon the couch; her sobs were deep and long. Never had I seen human passion so terrible; her whole frame quivered with emotion; the very couch on which she had cast herself shook under her, from the excess of her passion. There she lay, —her teeth chattered against each other, her eye was glazed, her cheek like marble!

"Mother, mother!" I cried; she answered not. I could not bear the sight of her agony. The excess of grief I had gone through had exhausted me; my head reeled; objects swam

in confused order before my eyes, and I sank lifeless on the floor.

When I came to my senses again, I found mamma and my maid chafing my temples with *eau de Cologne*. My mother seemed to have recovered from the effects of her late excitement; no traces of it were visible in her face; perhaps her cheek looked a little paler than it was wont.

"Lissette," said she to the attendant, "go, and fetch Miss Vernon's bonnet, and bring down her India shawl."

My surprise may be well conceived, when I heard my mother say, "Mrs. Somerton is waiting at the door; make haste, my dear, she is going to take us to Whitehall Stairs, as I told her my coachman was ill."

I faltered out, "Oh pray, dear mamma! let me stay at home; indeed I am too ill to go out to-day."

Though she might have seen the truth of this statement in my pale cheek and hollow eye, she

made no answer, but assisted to dress me. I made no resistance,—I felt completely in her power. I was suffering from the effects of her anger towards me. Her threats, her curses were ringing in my ears. I could scarcely crawl as I followed her into Mrs. Somerton's carriage.

She had completely recovered her calmness, for she began talking to that lady on the most indifferent subjects.

Caroline Somerton was in high spirits, and began telling me that it was in the Morning Post that Lord Montreville had challenged Charles Stuart. "But tell me, Julia," she said, "when did the conquest take place?"

"In the reign of William the Conqueror, year 66," answered her mother, who was deaf, —(great objection, by the way, to a chaperon, who should have the use of *all* her faculties).

"No, no, mamma," replied her daughter, "in the reign of William the Patriot, year 36."

"Pray, do you know," asked Lady Elinor, "whether the rich and hideous Charlotte Lori-

mer is to marry Lord Neville or Sir Willoughby Dartmore?"

"I have settled," answered Mrs. Somerton, with a triumphant air, "that she does not marry either. She thought, no doubt, that her riches would put the smiles and bright eyes of a pretty girl at a discount; and that all men preferred five thousand per annum to a snowy skin, and a rent-roll to a red lip. Having three daughters, all handsome and portionless, I considered it my duty to prevent such a nefarious transaction, as an heiress *buying* a husband. Well! I engaged Lord Neville in conversation, and though I felt in a devil of a humour, I invented several puns for his amusement; and at a convenient opportunity fired off the following:—'Why is Charlotte Lorimer like Mount Vesuvius?' Of course he was *très bête*, and could not say why; but I kindly told him,—'Because she is subject to *eruptions*.' Of course he repeated this to Sir Willoughby. A man will often marry a rich old woman he cannot like,—he may take a wife, knowing her to be a con-

summate fool,—but men will rarely wed the object of a strong disgust."

Arrived at Whitehall Stairs: as I was stepping into the boat I heard mamma say, "Oh dear, Lord Montreville, I am so glad you're come; just help Julia."

When I heard his hated name, and on his attempting to hand me in, a loud scream involuntarily escaped me, as I drew back my hand in horror.

"Captain Damer! Captain Damer!" screamed out Caroline Somerton, at the highest pitch of her voice, as a set of gentlemen-rowers pulled up alongside our boat; "I insist on your joining our party. How lucky, to be sure," continued she, blushing with delight, "that we should find you here, as we just want one more rower,—William Vernon being on guard."

Poor Mrs. Somerton looked daggers at her daughter, but to no purpose, as Caroline did not take the slightest notice of her, and was not quiet, till she had established her favourite beau, with an oar in his hand. I am quite convinced that

this *ruse de guerre* of hers was a preconcerted plan.

Mamma sat between Lord Montreville and myself, and said with doating love, "The air will do its dear little head good." She then tried to make Lord Montreville as much at his ease as possible, by devoting her whole attention to him; and giving him advice in the most confidential manner, and with an air of mother-in-law solicitude. As for me, I sat miserable and wretched, well aware that I must choke if I attempted to speak.

Mrs. Somerton was in a dreadful humour; found fault with every thing, and nearly upset us by fidgeting from one side of the boat to the other. Her daughter Caroline was in high glee, and kept saying, "How dull you all are! one would think you were all sea-sick, except, indeed, Julia Vernon, who looks love-sick. For the gentlemen,—

"Lord Montreville parait trop chaud;
Captain Fergusson n'est pas très beau;
Les Dames muettes, ne disent le mot,
Et tous les hommes sont bêtes, et sots!"

When we arrived at our appointed destination, Caroline Somerton and Captain Damer disappeared very suddenly, to Mrs. Somerton's great annoyance.

Lady Trimleston (the giver of the *dejeuné*) was of ignoble birth: her lord was dead. She had worked herself, by indefatigable industry and perseverance, into a certain set, and was patronised by Lady Elinor; not because she was fashionable, but my mother had *ton* enough of her own to be able to *friser la corde* sometimes. The fact is, she had *carte blanche* to ask all the young men she chose to Lady Trimleston's parties; who, poor woman! was too honoured in feeding and amusing mamma's high-born and fashionable acquaintance. It is certainly a curious anomaly—giving parties for other people's friends. Lord Montreville quizzed her very much, and gave her the *soubriquet* of *La Chiffonière*, on account of her asking "the lame, halt, and blind" to her house. Nevertheless, his lordship pronounced her *œuil de perdrix* champagne excellent, and vowed she was "a

good old girl." Her activity was wonderful; her tongue incessant. She was for ever asking questions, but fortunately had not the patience to wait for the answers; she had a weak, squeaking voice, as Captain Cleveland remarked, something like a penny trumpet in a consumption. This lady had a son, a youth of thirty years of age, "the apple of her eye;" and fearful was she of any chaperon pouncing on "this gentle tassel" as their prey. Amongst her other qualifications, she was perpetually giving people "nick-names." Her *boy*, as she usually designated this great lump of humanity, she called "*Chou-chou;*" Mamma was denominated "*Bibi*,"—I was elegantly named "*Bijou*," and Lord Montreville fell under the designation of "*Coco*."

We had not been long at Richmond, before Miss Brown came up to me, and said, "Thank you for cutting me last night—what's the matter with you to-day?—are you like me, who fall in love fourteen times in a fortnight?"

I turned from this disagreeable creature in

disgust, and attempted to speak a few words to "*Chou-chou.*" Whether his mother had primed him never to speak to young ladies, I know not; I tried the creature on every subject, but had he been deaf, dumb, and blind, I could not have been listened to, spoken to, or looked at less than I was.

Whilst I was putting on an animated look, which, *par parenthese,* I have the knack of doing, *á volonté,* that mamma might not pester me with Lord Montreville, the dinner was announced. There was a general rush; but mamma kept tight hold of Lord Montreville's arm, that he might not be carried away by the stream.

A lady, much over-dressed, and with a face of the brightest, most vivid scarlet, passed by, apparently to the displeasure of Lady Trimleston, who said to her confidante, Miss Brown, "There is old Miss Beetroot, *chienne de femme !*—I must take care that she does not *enlévé mon Chou-chou, étoile de ma vie, joie de mon existence.*"

"What a set of odd people she has," whis-

pered mamma; "who ever heard of the name of Beetroot!"

"A German name, I should fancy," said Montreville.

At last we were all seated except Mrs. Somerton, who was gone in search of her daughter. Mamma positively guarded Lord Montreville like a dragon, till she saw him safely placed between me on one side, and the lady with the *cérise* face on the other, judging her to be perfectly harmless. As to Lord Montreville, he seemed most anxious to make amends for his conduct the night before, in putting forward every energy to render himself agreeable. To effect this, he began by carving an immense pigeon pie, and offered some to a little cross-looking woman opposite to us, who had a little child on her knee, and a gentleman next to her, whose auricular nerves did not seem very acute, as he was obliged to have recourse to an ear-trumpet. Lord Montreville civilly said, "Will you have a little of this pie, ma'am?" She refusing, this good-natured young man said,

"Will you ask your better-half, the stout old gentleman next to you, whether he will have any?"

I instantly saw that something had gone wrong, by the change that overcast the lady's face, as she said, "This gentleman, sir, is *my* father."

Several of the young ladies were so foolish as to laugh at this. As to poor Lord Montreville, he looked quite frightened, and said to me, "How black she looks—what shall I do?"

I answered, "Speak to your neighbour, and look as if nothing had happened."

"Oh, my Jove!" said he, "she is so ugly!" Nevertheless, with the most implicit obedience, he said, "Miss Beetroot, may I have the honour of taking some champagne with you?"

"Sir!" said she, her face getting perfectly crimson, "how dare you insult me in such a manner! It is very surprising that you should so far forget yourself, as to upbraid me for my complexion. But I know *where* you learnt it—I am as God made me. Know, sir,

that my name is Robinson, and not Beet-root!!"

By this time she had pumped herself up into the most violent hysterics, and was carried out of the room screaming and kicking *les pieds dans l'air*—Lady Trimleston, in fits of laughter, screaming out—"*Ah! mon Dieu, j'en mourrai—ah, ah, ah! Milord Coco,* how well you did say dat to her. *Ah, Dieu! ai-je ri!—je n'en peux plus.*"

Lady Elinor, much displeased, kept saying, "Really, Lady Trimleston, you should not subject people to this, with your detestable nicknames:"—but she was unheard, on account of the shouts of laughter which proceeded from that lady.

In the midst of this uproar and confusion, poor, fat, old Mrs. Somerton rushed into the room, in a state of distress, very evident in her manner and complexion:—"My dear Miss Vernon," said she to me, "Caroline has set off, with that *bête noire* of mine, George Damer. I have been up Richmond Hill, and down again,

and cannot find her—my palpitations are dreadful—you are young and can run fast. Pray don't refuse my request—none but a mother can tell what I feel."

Lord Montreville said, "Come, Miss Vernon, a run up the hill will do us both good."

I was about to refuse, really not having the constitution and strength to go; but mamma gave me a look so terrible, that I winced beneath her glance. To oblige Mrs. Somerton, Lord Montreville and I accordingly raced after the fugitive, like two policemen after a pickpocket. But having made the tour of the park, without success, we returned to the house in time to find Mrs. Somerton flat on her back in a fainting fit, and every one in a state of dismay. As all the ladies were tormenting the unfortunate woman—one deluging her head with water, another burning a feather under her nose, &c. &c. I took up a letter, which I found open on a table, which contained the following agreeable and edifying information:—

"Do not be angry, my dear mamma, with me,

I have taken decided measures, but I trust to be happy with the man I adore. Riches bring not happiness with them, and *he* is not rich—but I shall never be a burden to you. It is useless to pursue me, for you can never persuade me to forsake my husband.

"CAROLINE DAMER."

I was much surprised and amused, that she had gained her point so well. When I heard *la voix glapissante* of Miss Brown, who was genteelly forcing her handkerchief down her throat, to stifle the effects of her risible propensities, I went to her and said, "In a moment like this, be not so unkind as to laugh."

"Oh," she cried, "I am such a merry-hearted *little girl*, that I can even find *fun* in others' woes. When I saw," continued she, "Miss Somerton set off with such expedition, I boded she was after no good—a little sly thing! So I followed her to Richmond church, where she was married with the greatest composure. She then wrote the letter in the vestry room, (into the window of which I peeped,) gave it to the

clerk to deliver to her mamma, and then set off with her beloved in a carriage and four. Trust me for finding out a hornet's nest—it was all preconcerted."

At length Mrs. Somerton came to her senses again. Her other two daughters thought it best to take her home by land. Mamma was obliged to go away also, for, said she, "If I return by water, I cannot go in a hackney coach from Whitehall Stairs to Park Lane."

Mrs. Somerton was in a dreadful state, crying and sobbing most violently, and murmuring out, "It is all that boat, that horrid boat! Oh, my child! my child! who refused a duke to marry a beggarly ensign! She, the beauty of London, to live in a barrack yard! Oh! Caroline! in losing you, I have lost my heart's idol, my own pet child—ungrateful, cruel Caroline!"

Really the laments of this poor bereaved woman, *m'ont navré le cœur.* When we were seated in the carriage, mamma said, "Pray come in, Lord Montreville, I assure you there is plenty of room."

"Indeed, I won't submit to that," cried Mrs. Somerton with great spirit; and recovering in the most sudden manner, "Have mercy on my horses, Lady Elinor, we are five already in the coach—drive on!"

She then shut her eyes, and tied, *en chaperon*, her handkerchief round her head. Her daughters were frightened, and did not speak; neither did I nor Lady Elinor, till at last the silence was broken by mamma asking whether the Somertons were going to Lord Mornington's grand ball, which was to take place the following night.

"No," replied Mrs. Somerton sharply, "we are not fine enough for him,—the airs people give themselves are disgusting:—pray, what are the Morningtons, but law-lords? I always tell Mr. Somerton, who seems to have a sort of delight in making his family out a set of quizzes, that Lord Mornington would give half his fortune to have one drop of our blood in his veins."

"He'd purchase it at a high price at any rate," observed Lady Elinor.

"No," continued Mrs. Somerton, "we are not going."

"I wish we were," sighed Clara Somerton.

"You know, Julia, that Charles Stuart is his nephew, and as he is every thing to his uncle, and as you know him so well, I thought perhaps you might get us an invitation—would you, dear Julia?"

"No, she cannot," said Lady Elinor, peremptorily; "the thing you ask is an impossibility."

The conversation was again dropped, nor was silence broken until we stopped in Park Lane. At the door of our house we saw my brother William.

"Well," said Mrs. Somerton, "I thought you were on guard."

"Not I," replied he, "I have been ready to hang myself all day, from want of something to do. I suppose I was not asked to row you down to Richmond, because I am a *detrimental*, eh, Mrs. Somerton?—Oh, by the way, I forgot to tell you an immense piece of news:—George Damer's uncle, Sir Henry Fitzwalter, a strong

hale man, broke a blood vessel this morning and died immediately,—consequently George Damer is one of the greatest *partis* in England perhaps."

"Merciful Powers! I thank thee!" ejaculated Mrs. Somerton. "Captain Vernon, prepare yourself for a surprise, Caroline married him this morning."

"I am sure she had my full consent so to do," replied my brother.

"How seldom one meets with so much romance and reality. If every one could have what was wished, what a general massacre of rich uncles would take place," remarked Lady Elinor.

The next morning mamma had such an influenza, that she could not leave her room. Lord Montreville called, and I really believe staid three hours: I thought he never would have gone away. He said, "Miss Vernon, I have something very particular to say to you. Will you allow me to defer it until to-night?"

When he was gone, mamma said, "I cannot

go to-night to the ball,—I am certain Lord Montreville will propose—I charge you not to dance with that Stuart,—mind, Julia. I will be obeyed;—on your answer to Lord Montreville depends the existence of the whole family."

I went to this ball, chaperoned by Lady Darnley. In happier days I used to say that her daughters, the Ladies Maxwell, were the most humdrum girls I ever met with, for they were content to dance at balls with a married man, and were quite amused at hearing how well his little girl learnt the piano-forte, and how the little boy liked Latin and Greek, with other equally agreeable domestic details. When we got into the ball-room, Lord Mornington said to his nephew, "Charles, you shall open the ball, go and choose some lady."

He immediately sought me;—I refused—it was a desperate effort, but I did refuse. He looked very blank at this, but instantly recovering himself, asked Lady Sophia Maxwell to open the ball. Oh, *how* I envied her! a pang

of jealousy shot through me. Never had I before observed her fine expressive eye. Ah! thought I, a large fortune makes the crooked look straight, and changes red hair into bright auburn. So, continued I, here am I, Julia Vernon jealous of Lady Sophia, and she does not seem to dislike his attentions. Has she then found out that a handsome man is more agreeable to dance with than an old quiz?

"Why so pensive—fairest of the fair?" said a voice near me:—it was Lord Montreville.

"Julia," continued he, "May I, before I pour the whole flood of my passion into your ears, before I humble myself to the earth before thee, beautiful tyrant! may I hope that you will give me some encouragement? may I hope that you do not *hate* me?"

I bowed my head in silent grief; alas! what could I say? I remembered the account I should have to render to my mother.

"Oh, Julia!" he said, "I thank you for your silence, it has given me hope—it has given me courage to proceed. Never have I seen any

woman so lovely, so perfect, both in body and mind as you are. Julia, you are the soul of truth;—can you say you love me,—but pardon me, I see this distresses you. Unfeeling monster that I am to have no regard to your feelings, and thus expose them to the frigid gaze of these heartless votaries of fashion! Will you see me to-morrow morning?"

I rose and said, "I shall be prepared."

Had I staid a moment longer in the ball-room I must have fainted away. I quickly passed through a suite of splendid apartments, till I got to a dark room dimly lighted, there I wept unobserved. "Oh, my mother!" cried I, in an agony, "you cannot again curse me, for I have sacrificed all for you."

I staid there nearly an hour with no other company but my own miserable thoughts, when I heard a step near me:—the blood rushed to my head—my heart beat with giant force against my side, till I thought it must burst—yes, it was no mistake—it was—Stuart. He started, seeing me, and was about to retire.

"Mr. Stuart," cried I, quite bewildered, "do not let me drive you away."

"I was fearful of intruding—of perhaps again offending," he said.

"*You* offend me! indeed, indeed, you never offended me!"

"Yet, why shun me — why refuse to dance with me?"

"Do not blame me," I said; "I have been taught to believe every evil, without *one* redeeming quality, to be yours — I have been told to shun, to avoid, aye, even to hate you."

"And who," burst from the lips of the indignant Stuart,—"who is the foul-hearted demon, who would traduce me to you,—angel of beauty and goodness that you are? Tell me — who is my traducer, and by Heaven!"—

"Hold!" I cried; "your enemy is *my* mother!"

"Oh Julia!" said Stuart; "it has indeed cut me to the heart, to hear that you are taught to hate one, who's destiny is in your hands — one

who loves you, with a love approaching unto madness."

"Love *me!*" I shrieked, quite beside myself; "love me!—better would it have been for both had you said you *hated* me!—Oh, Stuart! wherefore say this?"

"Julia, hear me one moment," said he; "my fortune is not large; I cannot place a coronet upon that lily brow;—I cannot purchase you with gold; but if the most devoted, lasting love—"

"That word again," I cried; "banish it for ever. Nay, Stuart, thou shalt!—thou *must!* I cannot draw down a punishment from heaven by listening to you. Stuart! I have sworn to wed another. Heaven and earth have witnessed the oath. I cannot be a perjurer!"

"Julia," replied Stuart; "if you will consent to fly with me this night, an aged parent shall be a mother to you. Oh, Julia, Julia!—Will you, my own loved one, consent to fly with me. My Julia—idol of my heart—will you—will you?"

"No!" I said; "it must not be — not one word more — not a step nearer. Stuart! the maiden who could be so lost, who could so far forget herself, as to forsake her parents to follow the man she loves, is unworthy to reign in such a heart as yours. She who has deceived once may deceive a second time. Oh, Stuart!" continued I, throwing myself in an agony at his feet — "as you would be merciful to my peace of mind — leave me; it is hard for one so young as I am, to be sacrificed at the altar of ambition. Leave me; you know that I have not fortitude to resist your entreaties; — do not force me to leave a name in the world with the foul accompaniment of dishonour — shew some lenity for me; oh! persuade me not against my duty, or I shall expire at your feet." He spoke not again — I looked on him. Never had I seen a face so changed by grief; the agony he suffered was too dreadful for me to witness.

I had thought my own woes unparalleled till I saw his; I thought the cup of my misery

was filled to the brim, till I saw grief more dreadful — more appalling than mine; the drops of agony stood on his brow — he moved not — he seemed transfixed. I could bear the sight of his anguish no longer; I rushed out of the room, and, with the swiftness of lightning flew down stairs. The people must have thought me mad, indeed I felt quite distracted. Thus, thus, I parted from him, without wishing him a farewell for his happiness. No good-bye — no kind wish — nothing. Fortunately for me, Lady Darnley never staid later than one o'clock at any ball, and I found her waiting for me in the cloak-room. When I reached home, I received a message that my mother desired to see me. When I entered her room, she said :—

" Julia, has Lord Montreville proposed ? — he has ? — I thank thee, Heaven !"

I sank by her bedside, — she was evidently much affected as she motioned me from her room. Oh, what a night I passed ! Great God ! I never can forget it. " Alas, alas !" I cried ; " I have no friend — no protector, to

counsel and befriend me. Stuart knew not what he said, when he asked me to elope with him. To my sisters I could not go; they would spurn me, — they would say, come not to us, we married against our own inclinations; why should not you? — why are you to be the favoured one? My uncle, Lord Morven, too, what would he do for me, — aye, for me his idol — his much-loved Julia? He would say, "Come not to me, you married a beggar; follow then the trade, the calling of a beggar; — if you cannot dig, be not ashamed to beg; beggars have no shame."

The next morning mamma was better; she sent me down stairs to speak alone to Lord Montreville. What I suffered from the conflicting passions raging in my bosom is not to be described. "Courage!" I said to myself; "I have gone through much; more is still required ere the grave close over its victim: blessed and much wished for consummation!—Lord Montreville," said I, "I am now going to trespass on your patience in suffering me to speak plain-

ly to you. You tell me that you love me; you ask me to return that love. Alas! frankly I avow that it is not in my power to do so. You must have seen that my heart is not in my own keeping — never can be mine. At this moment I love another — aye, love him, though I bow in submission to my duty. But this is not all. I cannot marry you under a false impression. Montreville, we are beggars. To you we shall be dependant for the very bread we eat. Does not this deter you? We lived beyond our means; creditors became importunate; we had not wherewith to satisfy them. My father heard of a speculation by which, if he hazarded his whole fortune, he might become possessed of millions. My mother expostulated, reasoned, entreated of him, not to run so great a risk. — It was all in vain. He staked every thing — all we had. He lost that all, and made us beggars!"

"Now Julia," replied Montreville; "listen to me. I have loved you long and fervently; but though I feel at this moment that I would

risk my life, name, fortune, all I own most dear to win you; your generous confidence has placed me in so despicable a light, that I will renounce you. Yes, Julia! though Heaven bear witness how I love — adore you even to idolatry, yet be happy with Stuart! — I will, I must renounce you!"

"*Never!*" cried my mother, as with fury sparkling in her eye, she rushed into the room; "never, while I have life, shall she wed another save you. My lord! my lord! is this the conduct of a man? Do the clashing of swords, the cries of the wounded, the sight of millions dying around a warrior make him flee from the field of battle, and brand his front with the name of coward? and would you, for a few tears, a few sighs, renounce the hand you are trying to win? — Shame, shame on you! show more manhood. And you, madam!" continued she, turning fiercely on me; "do you brave me?"

"No, no, mother!" cried I, falling on my knees before her; "if Lord Montreville will

accept of a blighted, widowed heart, if he will accept of a spirit humbled and broken, of a form faded and crushed by sorrow, I am his! Oh, mother! do not again curse me; do not curse your last-born child! Montreville, plead for me."

"It is well!" said my mother, imprinting a kiss on my burning forehead; "Montreville, into your hands do I commit my child; be to her a good and an honourable husband. Guide her through the intricate and slippery paths of life; see that she swerve not from the right way. Shield her from all the temptations and snares of a wicked world, which is as a 'wolf in sheep's clothing.' Befriend her in sickness and in sorrow. Be her protector, guardian, friend. Love, honour, and cherish my beloved child!"

"I will!" said Lord Montreville.

"Swear it!" demanded my mother.

He took up a Bible which lay on a table, and kissing the sacred volume, said, "I swear."

"And now, Julia," continued my mother;

"I charge you, as you value your own honour, and your parents' peace, depart not from the duty you owe your husband, and your Creator. I charge you, as you value your own immortal soul, to love, honour, and obey, your husband."

"I swear," alone broke from the lips of the broken-hearted child. Lord Montreville, enraptured clasped me to his bosom; he called me his bride, his beautiful. Man as he was, tears gushed from his eyes, and the big drops rolled down on my neck. I did not weep, my heart was nigh breaking; but not a tear escaped me. Even as he held me to his bosom, I thought on the future. The horrible vision rose before me. A week hence and I should be his wife. Engaged to be married to one I did not love, when I loved another;—so intensely—so devotedly. It was no dream! No! it was a dreadful, palpable, reality. I had vowed, aye sworn, to wed one I abhorred. Nothing could now save me. The thoughts which crowded on my bewildered brain, were

maddening. I tore myself from his embrace with the force of a maniac, and rushed out of the room.

When my mother came, as she afterwards told me, what a scene presented itself to her! There, on my bed I lay, my white dress dabbled with blood; my eye glazed; she thought me dead; I had broken a blood-vessel. During that night, she imagined every moment would be my last. But youth is strong, and sorrow seldom kills. In the morning a change came over me, I gradually recovered, and in a week was able to see my affianced husband. But oh! grievous was I to look upon. I might indeed have been compared to a vessel at sea, the morning after a storm, when the raging blast has totally dismantled her; all her beauty gone, a very wreck . . . . . One only consolation was left me in my great affliction; one gleam of sunshine threw a light upon my gloomy path. My poor old grey-headed father would, in the wane of his years, descend in peace into the grave.

Lord Montreville would sit hours and hours by my side, content with only gazing at my face. One day he said, "Julia! when a young maiden has given her whole heart to one object, and that by some untimely accident she loses him, her only hope and joy; after a time, a long, long time,—would it be possible she could ever love again?"

"No, Montreville!" I replied; "that intense, devoted love you speak of, can never be transferred,—never, never!"

"Then Julia," asked he; "is there no hope for me?"

"Oh, Montreville!" I said; "torture me not with visions of the past, I have been like the maid you speak of; who loved, who idolized one object; I never can *love* again. My esteem, my confidence, my most devoted friendship is yours."

My mother fixed, at length, the wedding day: I was passive; indeed, since my dreadful illness, she could find no fault with me. I performed all she required; I made no resistance. The

morning of my nuptials she arrayed me with her own hands in the bridal dress of a sepulchred heart. "Never did you look so lovely," exclaimed she, in maternal pride, as she clasped a row of pearls around my throat, which might have paid ransom for a king. The magnificence of the preparations for my nuptials filled my heart with grief and despair. I was a victim, but I could not retract. I had sworn, and must abide by my oath.

* * * * *

I have performed my task; visions of gone-by days still cleave to my memory. At the banquet, at the ball, I am the proud, the haughty bride of Lord Montreville; but in the solitude of my chamber, I pray God to release me from the horrible phantoms which for ever pursue me . . . The time will soon come when the cold, damp, and narrow recesses of the grave will receive all that will remain of my mortal frame. Yet a little while, the jewelled hand that guides the pen through this narrative of my life will be withered. The dooming sentence, "Thou

shalt die and not live," will soon be verified in me. There is no grasp whose tenacity could hold me much longer from the sepulchre. Then let me wait mine hour with resignation. It must, — it will, — soon come!

VALERIE, OR, THE PREDICTION.

A TALE OF LIGNY.

BY

HENRIETTA MARY BEAUCLERK.

"Wrapt in the study of the heavenly sphere,
He neither cares nor feels for those who're near
Absorbed in the mysteries of his art,
He therein reads the secrets of man's heart.

"Love's cunning of disguises! spite of locks,
Skin vesture — it is she, and only she!
What will not constant woman do for love,
That's lov'd with constancy!

Hunchback.

VALERIE; OR, THE PREDICTION.

NOTHING was spoken of in every station in Paris, but the great battle that was soon to decide who was to be master of the universe. The streets were quite deserted; the very lamps suspended across them seemed not to give their accustomed light; darkness and terror reigned throughout. The places of public worship were attended only by a few devotees, praying for their countrymen, who, perhaps, were all doomed to perish, and finally to rest in unhallowed ground. Most of the houses were barred, and firmly closed, as if they imagined the enemy already at the city gates, and that their wooden shutters would protect them from injury.

Yet in every position, however critical, the

fairer part of the creation never forget one very important thing, namely, their dress. With them vanity is an innate feeling, and from the highest to the lowest, every female offers up her tribute to the altar of fashion. Even at that time of night, milliners' girls might be seen, hurrying along,—fear printed on every feature, carrying, perhaps, some splendid apparel, which was soon to adorn a Parisian belle at a select female coterie, for no male person was now seen to grace the apartments of the elegant and beautiful; France calling on all who were able to fight under her banners, to immortalize their names and sovereign.

In a dark, narrow street, in the suburbs of Paris, a tall figure, closely muffled up, was seen moving rapidly along. The individual appeared to be perfectly well acquainted with the road, intricate as it was; and though stopping repeatedly, it was from fatigue, rather than fear, occasioned by the distance of the alley from the more habitable part of Paris.

One house, if such it could be called, stood

apart from the other wretched dwellings, and through its low casement, obscured by dust and age, a lamp emitted its feeble and dying rays. The first story projected two feet over the ground-floor, and showed signs of rapid decay. Most of the plaster had fallen off, from age, and exhibited the laths to which it had once adhered. One side of the house was propped, and though this necessary precaution had been used, part of the upper story had given way, and was crumbling down.

The figure now cautiously approached the door, and knocked; silence prevailed: the stranger again rapped, and receiving no answer, entered the house. All was dark within: the stranger heeded not the obscurity, and, with some difficulty, found a small door in the passage, which, on pressing a spring, opened. The room was filled with smoke. The new comer, unable to distinguish any objects, paused. "Who comes at this hour of night? — the fates are not propitious. — Away, away! tempt not fortune: hence! fly from this den of

wretchedness, where all is misery." The speaker hastily rose, and snatching a lamp from the table on which he was leaning, approached his apparently unwelcome visitor.

"Is my coming unlooked for, learned seer? — surely to-night was the time appointed? — hast thou forgotten me?"

The cloak dropped from off the stranger, and Valérie de Livaraux stood before the astrologer. "The Marquise de Livaraux! and alone! — How could one so fair as you venture hither, unattended, at this late hour?"

"What have I to fear? — Paris is deserted, all are gone, young and old, and the unhappy Valérie is left alone, to mourn. Oh, Martignie! am I doomed to see thee no more? Shall those loved features be trampled under foot by thy foes? Shall no friendly arm shield the blow from thy devoted head? — Yes: — one shall save thee, one shall watch, in the hour of strife, and rescue thee! — But come;—do the fates smile on my destiny, or is the future doomed to be as hopeless as the present?"

"Lady, in my searchings after futurity, I have learned strange things; but thy destiny has surpassed them all. For thine own sake I would not that ye knew it; promise then, that for the space of nine days, this paper shall remain unread by thee."

"Ha! is it so terrible that you dare not breathe the words, and have committed to paper what you fear to tell me? But I am strong, and can bear it; nought, can fright me; speak, oh speak! shall Martignie ever claim me as his wife?"

"*Never!*" replied the astrologer, and in a minute he was rubbing Valérie's hands and temples with spirits, trying to restore her — for she had fainted.

"I ought to have borne the communication better; but I did not think to hear such a sentence. Only one more question will I ask: Can I do aught to bring about our union?"

"Nothing; forgive me lady if I pain you; but it were better to be frank. Ere this day month Martignie will cease to exist. Farewell,

then: hie thee to thy home, and strive to forget one who never can be thine."

"Forget! Know ye so little of woman's love, as to fancy I can ever forget my affianced husband? Bid the angry volcanoes cease to raise on high fire and smoke from the bowels of the earth! Command the vulture prepared to seize his prey, to desist, and henceforth feed no more on blood! You read my fate, but not the sentiment of my heart. Now listen: as long as the warm blood thrills through my veins, and gives life to my body, so long will I love him; sleeping or awake I think but of him, and sooner than forget one I esteem dearer than life, I would put an end to an existence hateful without him." * * * *

"The Marquise de Livaraux wears too much rouge decidedly," exclaimed Madame de Guétrie to her married daughter. "She does not seem to regret the absence of De Martignie much," continued she, "or to trouble herself about the perils he will have to encounter. I never could imagine why she accepted him; nothing but

a common adventurer. 'Tis true he was handsome, but I prefer blood before looks."

Her daughter sighed, as in her mind she contrasted her own old husband with De Martignie. None knew what was passing in Valérie's mind, or the state of her feelings, an hour before she had left the astrologer, whose conversation had decided her fate for life. Was her heightened complexion then to be wondered at? But no trace of agitation could now be observed.

At an early age she had the misfortune to lose her parents, who appointed her uncle, the Vicomte d'Harcourt, sole guardian, who, with his wife, educated her till the age of fourteen, when he was killed by a fall from his horse. Contrary to the custom of the time, Madame d'Harcourt introduced Valérie, unmarried, in the world when she was only eighteen. All wondered who would be her choice; but that was soon decided. Among the numerous suitors for her hand, the Chevalier de Martignie was, in less than three months, acknowledged as her accepted lover. A sort of mystery hung

over his birth and rank, yet Valérie heeded it not; she had wealth, and where could she bestow it better than on the man she loved? The marriage day was fixed; but how uncertain are the events of this life! De Martignie received an order to join the army, in which he said he held the rank of Captain. Valérie, in vain asked what regiment he belonged to, and where it was stationed; to all her questions he returned evasive answers. What did this mean? could Martignie deceive her? No, it was not in his nature; he was too good, too generous, to betray one who trusted in him so fully. Paris was placed in a complete state of defence; Napoleon was going to engage in a battle with England. For the protection of the frontiers during his campaign, Suchet was intrusted with the command on the frontiers of Switzerland, with directions to attack Montmellian as soon as possible, after the 14th of June, which day Buonaparte had fixed for the commencement of hostilities. Massena was ordered to repair to Metz to assume the government of that impor-

tant fortress. Napoleon quitted Paris with these memorable words, "I go to measure myself with Wellington." Ney was sent to Frasnes to drive the English from Quatre Bras. Napoleon went to Ligny, and Derlon with a division, amounting to ten thousand men, was placed near Marchiennes, serving as a centre of the army, either to support Ney or Napoleon; whichever might require assistance. On the 16th of June, two battles took place: that of Ligny was the principal action. The French Emperor was unable to concentrate his forces till three o'clock in the afternoon, at which hour it began with uncommon fury all along the Prussian line. The Mareschal Grouchy had given the word of command to march to the village of St. Amand to the relief of Buonaparte, when one of his aid-de-camps informed him that a young man well armed wished to speak with him, though it were but for a minute; at the same time begging the Mareschal to be cautious, in seeing a stranger, who was so mysterious in his manner.

"Never fear, he will not harm me; but quick, bring forth the stranger." A space was cleared before the Mareschal; a young man stepped forward and dropped on one knee; he was clothed in the same uniform as the soldiers; in his hand he held an unsheathed sword, which evidently had never been stained with blood. His face was so pale, but yet so beautiful, that the Mareschal paused astonished. The youth before him had not yet arrived at manhood, but sorrow hung heavily on a brow which resembled Parian marble, so bloodless was it. A fire scarcely human lighted up his dark eye, his pale lips quivered through suppressed emotion. The Mareschal at last broke the silence.

"Rise, young man, and tell me your bidding; do you bring despatches from the Emperor? or have you learnt tidings of the enemy?"

"Neither, sir;—I come from Paris to offer myself as private in your regiment. I have travelled night and day, to reach this place in time, and through all my fatigue, that hope has sustained me."

"There is no time for further parley. You know not, boy, the danger you will go through in the approaching battle: even now, we are on our road to the field of action; stay here and rest, your body is bowed down with fatigue, you are unfit to fight — Soldiers, on!"

"Stay, stay!" cried the youth, "I am strong and will follow. If you deny me the privilege of fighting under your banners, alone will I hie to the combat, and though I die in the attempt, win a name of glory."

"Join the ranks, then, quickly, for now we must use no delay."

When Grouchy joined the Emperor, the French had obtained possession of part of the village of St. Amand, after an attack of two hours. The sight of their comrades inspired them with fresh vigour; every danger and every toil were forgotten; and once more shouting, "Vive l' Empereur!" they renewed the attack. The heart of the young soldier who had just joined, sickened within him, as he gazed upon his fellow-creatures falling rapidly at his side.

How many mothers, widows, and orphans, would mourn this day? How many beheld the brave, the beautiful, go forth to battle, in the pride of youth, and the bloom of health? Years have passed away, and memory asks, where are they now? Gone! all gone! their bodies serving to enrich the ground, and from their ashes have sprung bright flowers, raising their heads luxuriantly over the last resting place of the brave. The sole support of an aged parent is no more. The hand that propped the sick child's head is powerless. The faithful lover, whose return is anxiously looked for, will never more hear the words of affection breathed by loving lips. The ardent eye will never again gaze on objects dear to every feeling of the heart. All slumber in an unbroken sleep, trampled on by the living; the anxious father could not now recognize in the mangled corpses before him, his own brave and beloved boy.

A tear trickled down the soldier's pallid cheek, as he gazed on the scene before him. His comrades all fought with desperate rage;

they thought of nothing but exterminating the enemy. His arm alone hung as if paralyzed; onwards he rushed to the charge, but yet his sword was unstained with blood; his wandering eye anxiously scanned the features of his companions in arms; no friend could he find among them. Anguish now took possession of his soul, and tears rapidly chased each other down his care-worn cheek. Bullets flew past, yet was he not touched; blows were given, yet was his body unharmed, — he seemed to possess a charmed life. The battle now was on the wane: numbers fell on each side; the Prussians became more desperate, as their defeat appeared more certain; the combat grew less general; the ranks were broken; each singled an adversary on whom to vent his hate and rage. A Prussian officer, decked with many orders, attacked the youth, who, till now, had remained passive. His sword was raised, and nearly touched the unknown's head, when the latter, snatching a pistol from his belt, discharged it at the Prussian; one word alone escaped his

lips, as he dropped dead at the feet of his destroyer, and that sound reached only the ears of his murderer. Another half-hour, and all was over; the din of battle, the clash of swords, the fading smoke, had all passed away, and Napoleon was master of the field! No sound prevailed save the moans of the dying, who were ordered to be attended to, and their wounds examined; whilst the dead were to be interred on the field of battle.

Mareschal Grouchy was much surprised on beholding the attendants approach, carrying in their arms the young soldier who had that morning joined, to all appearance lifeless. They said he had been found on the dead body of a Prussian officer; no mark of violence was apparent about his person, and he was not dead, for they could feel his heart beat. "Remove his cap, and bathe his face with water; let every thing be done for his recovery; 'tis a pity that one so young should perish." The cap was removed, and clusters of dark hair fell over

the young man ; restoratives were used, and in a short time the patient's eyes unclosed.

" De Martignie, —where am I ?" Could that look, that voice, be mistaken ? No — it was Valérie de Livaraux ; need we say her victim was De Martignie ! " Ha ! what horrid thought is this which flashes to my mind — the name he breathed, was mine. Yes, I have killed him ! — My hand fired the shot.—Ha ! there he stands,—and points to the wound in his bosom. Yes, De Martignie, I will extract the ball ; I have killed you, and now will I restore you to life. Nay, shrink not from my touch ; fear not, I will not harm thee." She paused, and pressed her throbbing temples with her hands, which were stained with the blood of De Martignie. " The astrologer spoke foolishly,—we shall be, we are united — nought shall separate us ; fly not from my embrace, poison is not in my touch — Martignie ! Martignie !" and stretching her arms forward as if to embrace some object, she once more fainted.

Tedious was her recovery, and when life again animated her frame, Valérie was deprived of reason! Little now remains to be said. Ralkreuth, a captain in the Prussian service, undertook, for a large reward, to proceed to Paris to spy the movements of Napoleon. For that purpose he assumed the name of De Martignie, and in that character, won the heart of the beautiful Marquise de Livaraux. Short was their love—fatal their end. The body of the Prussian spy was interred with victims of glory. There was no friend present to shed a tear to the memory of the brave, every one was revelling and rejoicing in victory. Quickly the liquor flowed, and gladly was it drank by the over-fatigued soldiers.

"Let us drink health and victory to our brave master, Napoleon! and may our foes perish on the field of Waterloo!" exclaimed a veteran, who had remained steadfast to Buonaparte through all his fortunes. The elated warriors shouted the toast, and fresh filled their glasses.

"Hold!" exclaimed a voice, whose melan-

choly tone contrasted strangely with the present feelings of the assembly.

> "Fixed was her look, and stern her air;
> Back from her shoulders streamed her hair;
> The locks, that wont her brow to shade,
> Stared up erectly from her head;
> Her figure seemed to rise more high,
> Her voice, despair's wild energy,
> Had given a tone of prophecy.
> Appall'd, the astonished conclave sate."—Scott.

"Never again shall Napoleon be victorious. On the field of Waterloo thus shall his standard be dashed to the ground as I dash it — thus shall it be trampled on as I trample on it. When the sun sets that even, the eagle shall no more soar on high, inspiring its brave followers to fight for its honour. Ere the sun sets that night, Napoleon shall cease to be emperor. Start not; it is written in the book of fate in characters of blood! —Martignie, on that night shalt thou claim me as thy wife! Stay, unloose not my hand, I am thine! I'll follow thee to death!" Valérie (for it was she) rushed from

the tent, and the next day her body was found stiff and cold, on the outskirts of the village. Thus perished one, whose existence was her love, and by whose hand, one who was dearer to her than life, fell.

Woman's love, when excited to the highest pitch, becomes a species of madness, that nothing can put a stop to; — like the mighty waters of a rushing torrent it sweeps every thing before it, marking utter desolation in its track. Love is a leveller of all things; there is no obstacle, however great, that woman's wit cannot surmount; rank is made equal, — fortune neglected, — age unheeded, — all forgotten, save the actual passion.

"The tender fancy smarts with every sting,
And what was love before, is madness now."

BE HAPPY NOW!

BY

CAROLINE FREDERICA BEAUCLERK

Be happy now! for thou'lt ne'er see me more;
These rending pangs will cease their throbs in death;
And though thou hast riven my bosom's core,
I still must bless thee, with my dying breath.

I ne'er can blame one I love so deeply;
It is not love, — 'tis more like adoration;
But thou'rt changed. Oh God! I bear it meekly,
Though my poor heart is suffering laceration.

To battle then! and when by foes I'm slain,
Will thine eye shine on in sunny gladness,
Or will a pearly tear thy cheek bestain,
And wilt thou own, I lov'd thee unto madness?

Great Heaven! this grief is more than I can bear;
This pallid cheek, this sunken dying eye,
Will brightly lustre at Death's glaring stare
When war's hoarse trumpets bray forth victory!

Be happy then, for I shall ne'er return;
Death, I can meet, — *thy* frown I cannot brave,
Since thy poor lover thou dost scorn and spurn;
Oh God! what's left me now? My grave! my grave!

THE HONEY MOON;

OR,

WHY DID I LOVE?

BY

CAROLINE FREDERICA BEAUCLERK.

"Passion blinds our eyes, and the light which experience gives is a lantern on the stern, which shines only on the waves behind us!"

COLERIDGE'S *Table Talk.*

"'Tis breathed in vain—
Thy sophistry of love!—
Though not in pride or cold disdain
Thy *falsehood* I reprove!—
Inly my heart may bleed—but yet
Mine is no weak—no vain regret;
Thy wrongs to me I might forget—
But not to Him above.

The tie so firmly bound
Is torn asunder now,
How deep that sudden wrench may wound
It recks not to avow.
Go thou to fortune and to fame—
I sink to sorrow—suffering—shame—
Yet think, when glory gilds thy name
I would not be as thou."

DALE'S *Poems.*

THE HONEY MOON;

OR,

WHY DID I LOVE?

The passions are the chief destroyers of our peace—the storms and tempests of the moral world.

No question requires more mature deliberation to answer than that of,—Why did I love? Most foolish causes have produced a feeling between the sexes called *une tendresse*, which often rushes headlong into an affection of the heart, by the generality named love; by the ascetic, "youth's frenzy;" and by the desperate, idolatry! It is the opinion of a modern author that a woman always thinks it right to fall in love with a man whom she has seen in his night-cap. Ruminating on the oddity of such a proceeding, I

was roused from my reverie by hearing pronounced in an audible voice, "I, Algernon Clarendon, take thee, Fanny Rochfort, to my wedded wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer." I then remembered that I was at a marriage, performed by special license, and officiating as bridesmaid to Lady Fanny Rochfort, the prettiest and most fashionable girl in London, who was now perpetrating that rashest of all desperate acts—marrying for love. I will now relate the incidents which followed this wedding, with a short account of the parties concerned.

Fanny Rochfort was beautiful and nobly born. Her hand had been demanded in marriage by many of the greatest *parti's* of the day; but Fanny looked coldly on coronets, and frowned on heirs-apparent. Of an ardent and romantic turn of disposition, she had formed the resolution of remaining single till she had won a young, fresh heart like her own,—one "that Cupid had not toyed with." Lady Fanny

declared she would never wed another's leavings!

Algernon Clarendon was a young man just emancipated from Oxford—extremely handsome—of good family, but very poor. Having waltzed with Lady Fanny three times, and paraded for a week on horseback by her barouche, with his white-gloved hand on her carriage door, concluded by a proposal of marriage in the Zoological Gardens. Lady Fanny paused for a moment, and began industriously digging up the gravel with her parasol. At length, to the infinite joy of her Adonis-like lover, her pretty lips faltered forth—"I will."

"My dear child," exhorted Lady Rochfort, "Mr. Clarendon has but the beggarly revenue of three hundred a-year, and I tell you frankly, that owing to your large family of brothers and sisters, I cannot afford to give you any fortune. I am beset on all sides by creditors—ruin and disgrace stare us in the face;—your father *will* keep race-horses, your brothers *will* gamble, your sisters *must* be educated, and I *must* wear

diamonds. We glitter, but, alas! we are not gold!"

"Never!" responded the love sick Fanny, —her sapphire eyes swimming in tears,— "never shall it be said that I renounced the idol of my heart through mercenary motives! With what feelings of disgust shall I look on the world, when I am with Algernon in our cottage *ornée* in the country. Dear Algernon! adoring thee as I do before marriage, my heart must burst from overflowing love, when placed at the pinacle, the very apex of human happiness,—I call thee—husband!"

But much as Fanny idolized her lover, she refused to wed him till after the expiration of a twelvemonth; thus putting the duration of his affection and fidelity to the test. When that period had terminated, to the satisfaction of both parties, the wedding day was fixed. The trousseau was ordered, a handsome chariot was built, Fanny hinted her partiality to a diamond comb and a pearl necklace, but Algernon said, "No, my angel, let a rose alone adorn thy

beauteous hair, and leave it to antiquated dames to hide their scaly, roach-like necks with pearls."

And Fanny thought of Abélard and Héloise, and answered—"Be it so—I shall be prouder of wearing thee, than all the treasures of Golconda mines."

The ceremony was performed—they were married.

Fanny looked at her wedding ring, and felt quite proud at being a wife. She then changed her blonde dress for a white satin travelling pelisse, which she thought would be useful to her in the country. The chariot with four horses, and postilions with bridal favours, drove to the door; the smart maid established in the dicky. Fanny turned pale, and tears gushed from her eyes.—"Good bye, mamma!—good bye, papa!" and she tripped down stairs through a file of menials, repeating—"God bless you, my lady."

Fanny rushed into the carriage, for she felt as if she must have swooned away on the pavement; and throwing her head on Algernon's

shoulder, she wept bitterly. Clarendon kissed away his bride's pearly tears, and Fanny smiled again, and assured him, it was the excess of love she bore him that had been too much for her.

"How happy we shall be in each other's love in the country," said Algernon, "without any of the world's petty cares and trivial amusements. 'Tis true, we shall be poor, very poor, but rational beings require not lucre. Seneca says, 'If you live according to the dictates of nature you will never be poor: if according to the notions of the world, you will never be rich.' The house which I purpose making our home is a small parsonage. I have a sister married to a clergyman, and finding the glebe-house too small for their numerous family, they have removed to another residence in the vicinity, and have let me the parsonage at £30, per annum."

"Oh, enchanting!" replied Fanny, "what a delicious thing to fall into:—your sister, no doubt, a most exemplary clergyman's wife—

dear kind hearted woman, who nurses the sick; and oh, Algernon! how I shall doat on her darling children!"

Converse like this beguiled the way till after having travelled eighty miles, they passed through a small village with a parish church. They then drove up a narrow lane. The shades of night were descending, but through the dusky evening gloom, a house one story high was visible.

"What can they mean by stopping at such a cut-throat looking place?" asked Fanny.

But before her husband could reply, a woman threw open the carriage door, and with a sharp shrill voice said, "Welcome to the parsonage."

"Great God!" exclaimed Lady Fanny. Clarendon hurried her into a low room, the sole furniture of which was a table covered with a cloth and two mould candles. Fanny saw her husband embraced by a sharp thin faced woman, who called him brother. Next a vulgar looking man in parsonic (Qy. rusty?) black, shook him violently by the hand, and then she saw her

dear Clarendon kissed and slobbered by seven dirty little children; and, finally, Algernon presented his lovely young bride, Lady Fanny Clarendon, to her new sister-in-law, Mrs. Ramsden.

"Pretty head you've got," said Mrs. Ramsden to her brother, "you never ordered a bit of dinner; so I have hired a charwoman and told her to boil a leg of pork. Do you like pork?" turning to Lady Fanny, who groaned faintly; while Mrs. Ramsden, who piqued herself on telling the honest truth, which means taking a savage delight in wounding one's feelings, said, in a loud whisper to the agitated bridegroom, "You've brought us a nice coil—a genuine fine lady."

The leg of pork, garnished with potatoes and greens, was now brought in by the old charwoman. But though Lady Fanny seated herself next to her husband at the dinner table, she could not satisfy her delicate appetite with the homely fair before her. The Ramsdens, however, set to, and all seemed tolerably cheer-

ful, save poor Fanny, who sat pale and tearful, averting her head from Mrs. Ramsden, on whom she looked as a tigress.

"A glass of mulled wine, Lady Fanny?" said Mr. Ramsden. She replied not, but rising from her seat, was gazing with eye-balls strained, clasped hands, and parted lips, on the further side of the dimly lighted room.

"Fanny!" exclaimed Algernon. A loud scream was the answer, and she fell lifeless on the floor. Clarendon carried the insensible girl up to her bed-room, where at last she revived only to relapse into violent hysterics. When the paroxysm had subsided, she fell into a state of torpor, and Algernon having left her in charge of her maid, Mrs. Sanders, returned to his relatives below. The distracted husband now discovered that young Jack Ramsden had pulled aside a black curtain which fell before a niche in the wall, and had thus disclosed to view a large human skeleton, which was fixed in a glass frame. Mrs. Ramsden spoke very unfeelingly on poor Fanny's alarm, remarking,

that she, herself, always lived in a room filled with skeletons without curtains to conceal them.*

The following morning Algernon's heart yearned with pity, as he gazed on his bride, when she entered the breakfast parlour. Her cheek vied with the dead white of her muslin robe. Still she looked lovely, for it only enhanced the ruby tint of her full lip. Fanny was indeed too fair and fragile a being to endure the privations attendant on poverty, and Clarendon discovered too late, that a poor man should marry a bustling, strong minded, healthy, active, and thrifty woman. Ah! thought he, let people without a farthing, before they tie the indissoluble knot of marriage, weigh well the poverty they must buffet against—the cuts, scorns, and rebuffs they will encounter—the

* Let this be not thought over-drawn: people soon accustom themselves to horrors in the country. I know a gentleman who always sleeps with a miniature coffin placed on his pillow every night. He brought me one day a small coffin made of black satin and lined with white, and on my refusing it, he said, "Why, you might keep your rings in it!"

starvation and rags in which they will most probably have to witness their progeny. If the portionless girl, about to wed a man equally poor, were to reflect for a moment, could she think it a happiness she bestowed on her lover to marry and become two paupers? thus hurling the object of her affections down a precipice of ruin—shame—beggary! See these lovers ten years hence. Where are their protestations, their vows of adoration?—Gone! and reproaches, altercations, tatters, and scanty fare, are the sorry substitute. A man may, and I know many scions of the aristocracy who do 'rough it' on two hundred a-year; but a wife is an expensive encumbrance to maintain. Your love may be an angel, still she must eat, drink, and be clothed. Oh! indeed, it is a cruelty to subject a man to such misery and perdition. "Love flies when poverty enters." To be *happy* in the wedded state there must be *de quoi*, to provide a comfortable house, a sufficient dinner, &c. &c.

Clarendon's musings were interrupted by

Lady Fanny, who, in a helpless tone of voice said, "I want some breakfast." Algernon nearly rung the bell off, and loudly ordered "breakfast!" In a few moments Mrs. Sanders, looking blacker than an impending thunder storm, or ten legions of demons, appeared loaded with a tray, spread on which was a metal tea-pot, brown sugar in a jar, and a couple of wedgewood cups and saucers. Lady Fanny declared she could not drink tea sweetened with molasses,—it was the counterpart of a black dose; and said she had sooner starve than eat salt butter, which she could only compare to cart grease. A violent altercation was now heard in the passage, in which the voices of Mesdames Ramsden and Sanders rose in *soprano alto*. The latter rushed into Lady Fanny's presence and announced her intention of immediately quitting her ladyship's service, Mrs. Ramsden having told her, it was her duty to help to dust the house, and also to make her mistress's bed. This, Mrs. Sanders swore, she never would submit to.

"Leave me, then," murmurred the trembling Fanny.

"Leave the house!" vociferated the indignant Clarendon.

"House! cottage—hovel—hut!" screamed the enraged Abigail, flouncing from the room, and banging the door to.

"Till you get another soubrette," said Algernon, "an orphan cousin of mine shall wait upon you,—Zoé Forester will make us a delightful companion; she is a dear little thing."

These words grated unpleasantly on Lady Fanny's tympanum, and she was thinking Clarendon's remark *un peu libertin*—when in stalked Mrs. Ramsden, looking very angry and red, followed by Zoé, a pretty, blue eyed, long ringletted, little sylph, who presented Lady Fanny with some strawberries.

"Ay, eat them," said odious Mrs. Ramsden, "our garden, though small, is fruitful, which we attribute to its having once been part of a church-yard; in digging we constantly find skulls and bones." Fanny turned quite sick,

and pushed away the produce of dead men's carcasses.

"How I long for my phaeton!" sighed Fanny.

"We always make use of our legs in these parts," remarked Mrs. Ramsden, displaying at the same time a pair thick enough to be useful, instead of ornamental, not to mention a foot as large as the marble model at Mr. Hope's.

Clarendon, after a long and earnest conversation with Miss Forester, which Lady Fanny vainly tried to catch the purport of, led his cousin from the room. Lady Fanny rose to follow them, when Mrs. Ramsden said, "I beg your ladyship will remain here." The request was unheeded,—Fanny caught a glimpse of Zoé's white dress, as she was entering an arbour in the garden. Clarendon then had a secret to communicate, and excluded his wife from his confidence! As these suspicions flashed through her brain, she threw up the window, leaped out, and arrived breathless at the bower; she was about to enter, but drew back, near fainting with horror as she heard Clarendon say, "Never

repeat this to Lady Fanny, the consequences might prove fatal."

Zoé wept, and replied, "I never will."

Algernon continued, "I consider it right, now that I have wedded another, to part with the tress of my first love's hair,—wear it, dear Zoé, for my sake."

He took a locket from his bosom, and kissing it fervently, gave it to Zoé. The tears of both flowed, when suddenly the stillness was rent, by a scream so loud, so shrill, it appeared superhuman. At the sight of Lady Fanny, Zoé fled, and Clarendon stood confronted with his wife.

"What! not one word," said Fanny, "thy downcast eyes which read the ground,—thy loudly beating heart, reveal thy guilt, thy falsehood to me. Thou lovest; but, oh, my God! thy wife is not the object of thy love."

"By heavens!" said Clarendon; "thou reignest paramount in my heart!"

"Thou hast no heart!" replied the infuriated wife; "or if thou hast, it is a foul deformed thing, unsound as carrion, untrue as

lovers' vows. A thing of dough, which every fool may lay his finger on and leave an impress there! Oh Clarendon! the horror, the disgrace, that overwhelms me at coming to the knowledge of being thy second love, will send me into my grave!" Saying this, she rushed from him, flew to her room, and fastened the door. In vain did Algernon try to force it open, in vain he conjured her to inform him in what he had displeased her. It was not till five o'clock that she appeared again down stairs. Clarendon then said:—

" Fanny, is this the conduct of a woman who swore even unto her Maker to love, honour, and obey, the man her virgin heart selected as the partner of her life?" He ceased, for he was shocked at perceiving the ravages that grief had worn in her beautiful face.

The Ramsdens gave, this day, *un diner de nôce;* and at Clarendon's entreaty, Lady Fanny consented to accompany him. Zoé performed the duties of lady's maid to the bride, who received her services in the most ungracious manner:

but Zoé bore her ill temper with the greatest sweetness and gentleness. Lady Fanny was at length dressed, and in all the pomp of beauty and fashion, entered Mrs. Ramsden's drawing-room.

Passing through an assembled circle of natives, all *à la gobemôuche*, Clarendon was arrested in his progress, by a stout, manly-looking woman, in a flame-coloured gown and turban. This walking scarlet-fever was presented to Lady Fanny, as Lady Skipsey, who instantly thrust forth her husband, Sir Jacob, and her daughter, Miss Skipsey, who was "coming out," at the ensuing assize-ball. Lady Fanny thought "coming out" a *mal à propos* term for a country miss, whose pleasure and ambition consisted in romping a Roger de Coverly with a fox-hunting squire, or country bumpkin, at those terrestial pandemoniums yclept county-balls!

Lady Skipsey was the wife of a brazier, who invented a brass pen, warranted to write by itself; and as the present is the *brass*, not the

"golden age," the ingenious mechanic was rewarded by being dubbed Sir Jacob Skipsey.

Another Ostrogoth was next presented in the person of a Mr. Baxter, who instantly fired off with, "London very gay?" "Indeed I don't know," was the icy reply. "I know a great friend of your ladyship's, — Mrs. Todlikins; charming woman, full of life and dash, yet her wit is never at the expense of her gentility; does your ladyship *attend* her squeezes? — difficult to get a ticket for them, — uncommonly select."

Lady Fanny was now approached by Mr. Ramsden, with his arm like a bent skewer, into which she locked her fairy hand, and having begged of Clarendon to keep near her, led the way to dinner. Fanny having had neither dinner, nor breakfast since her wedding, felt famished, but was forced to refuse attempting white soup, which resembled hot paste, and fiery sherry which scraped her throat. When she called to mind the récherché dinners of her own dear home, how *could* she touch the ill-

dressed fare before her, which consisted of shoulder of mutton and onion-sauce—minced beef and poached eggs—hash, with a sauce the colour of London mud—tongue in the shape of a cupid, its wings made of parsnip, and its face of a white turnip-radish. Fanny longed for *une soupe santé à la pastorelle, — torse de chevreuil mariné à la Saint Hubert,—un arliquinade de goles et merlins à la financière,—des filets de chapons de Caen à l'Italienne.* As a last resource she turned to the side-board; but instead of *hure de sanglier, cardon au beurre d'anchois à la Sefton,* or *bourtaga,*—cold beef, and Gloster cheese met her famished eye. Clarendon, who for the last year had been daily in the habit of dining at Lord Rochfort's table, felt equally disappointed; Sauterne, Bourdeaux, and Hermitage, those three indispensable necessaries being at a discount. The health of the bride was proposed after dinner in a "neat speech,"—"three times three!"

"What wine will your ladyship take? Champaigne?"

"The gooseberry wine to Lady Fanny," ordered with an authoritative tone, Mrs. Ramsden; and with amazement and horror, Fanny saw her glass filled with a white liquid. "It is excellent, I assure you," said Mrs. Ramsden—"infinitely superior to champaigne."

A loud shriek from Fanny, followed with the ejaculation of "I am poisoned!" caused general alarm; but Mrs. Ramsden never lost her presence of mind, and put an end to the confusion and panic, by tasting the effusion, and informing Lady Fanny, who was wishing Algernon farewell for ever, that she was not poisoned, but had *merely* swallowed a glass of Epsom salts, which by some mistake had been given. "It will do you all the good in the world," remarked Mrs. Ramsden; "my children take a glass daily before dinner."

Dinner over, Lady Fanny had to endure the martyrdom of hearing the ladies sing English ballads. Oh! what is so deplorable as the performances in *general* of amateurs. Pianoforte, harp, flute, violin, and voice, belong legi-

timately to Herz, Bochsa, Nicholson, De Bériot, and Malibran. Dreadful are they when strummed, twanged, squeaked, screeched, and squalled upon by unscientific, conceited, and inflated amateurs. Fanny occupied herself by writing the following to Lady Rochfort:

"MY DEAR MAMMA,

"I left you yesterday, anticipating the most delightful honeymoon that bride ever spent; but every hour of my married state has brought the most extraordinary and dreadful calamities. Even as I write, my heart feels bursting with anguish, for oh! I have discovered that Algernon loved, before he married me, his cousin Zoé Forester. This duplicity has well nigh killed me, for you know how often he has sworn that I was his *first* and *only* love; — *this* was my inducement for wedding one objected to by my family, he being bereft of title and fortune. Pray, dear mamma, send me the Morning Post regularly, and also my little spaniel. I thought I should not require a thing to fondle, when

once I had a husband. Ah! Algernon little knows the devoted heart he is trampling on. Really, at this moment, I could administer with pleasure a dose of arsenic to that hated Zoé Forester. Expect to see me in a day or two.

"Your affectionate, and heart-broken

"FANNY CLARENDON."

Tea and the men came in, and Mr. Baxter persecuted Lady Fanny till she wished him dangling in the air at Tyburn. He was a lawyer walking the circuit: a character which the fair Thalia of our day has described so well in her "Almack's Comic Song," and Fanny indeed found that

> "Those very grave judges, do tell one, great fudges!
> The small talk of big wigs, is woefully small,
> And the stale circuit jokes may amuse country folks,
> But no counsel shall plead them for me at a ball."

"A cup of bohea, Lady Fanny?" inquired Mr. Baxter.—"Shall I cream you?—has your ladyship any idea of going to the assize ball?

If you have any idea of dancing — may I presume to be the happy man?"

"I have no ideas about any thing," answered Fanny, snappishly.—Baxter might have quoted Voltaire's saying, that ideas are like beards,—women have none!

Zoé was asked to sing; and, unlike young ladies who are always suddenly attacked (poor things!) by sore throats, &c., when solicited to perform, Zoe struck her guitar, and sang that most lovely and thrilling ballad, "Love not!" Her voice faltered, and tears glistened in her dove-like eyes, as she came to the words of "Love not,—the thing you love may die!"

Lady Fanny kept repeating in a querulous voice, "Algernon take me away!" Clarendon was shocked at her rudeness,—he felt deeply grieved at her misery, and already reproached himself for having transplanted this fair flower from the hot bed of luxury to such a ploughfield of clods, in which she seemed drooping like a dying lily. Lady Fanny at length declared she would remain no longer.

"Only one moment, dearest," said Clarendon: "I *must* sing a duett with Zoé."

Fanny walked straight up to the piano,—ungovernable rage had usurped so complete an empire over her as to transform her naturally mild countenance, into one resembling a fallen angel's. She twisted Zoé round by the arm, and cried, "You shall not! — by Heaven! I would sooner expire than hear her sing with you!"

Clarendon's eyes gleamed like a basilisk's; but suppressing his anger and emotion, he led, or rather carried, Lady Fanny from the room. The scene was dreadful and violent that ensued. —Lady Fanny vowed on her knees, that if Clarendon ever spoke again to Zoé, she would return to her parents, and leave him for ever.

"Kill me! — kill me!" urged the headstrong girl; "but for pity's sake let not the fangs of jealousy begnaw my very soul away!"

"So help me God!" swore the distracted husband, "I do not, — never did, love Zoé Forester; how basely you wrong that spotless

maiden! 'Tis beyond my power to display to you the full extent of your ungenerous accusation, and the wickedness of your insane behaviour. The wretch shows not more folly when surrounded by the dying and the dead in the time of plague;—he cries, Avaunt! grim spectre! What though the poison is fiercely burning in his veins, and innumerable plague-spots appear on his brow?—he braves Heaven's wrath, quaffs off intoxicating draughts,—basks in the radiance of dear woman's smile, — luxuriates in her soft embrace, and gives himself wholly up to maddening revelry. Infatuated as the worldling is, he is not guilty of a folly so incomparable as yours. — You might be happy as an angel, with an adoring husband who proffers thee the sparkling cup of happiness, which you dash away. Fanny! — Fanny! — I blush for you. Oh! remember it is only vitiated minds who are prone to think ill of others!"

"These words are idle, and meant to divert me from my purpose, Clarendon!" screamed

the frantic girl, as she clasped her hands round her husband's throat, so as to prevent him averting his head, while she fixed on him eyes, dazzling with unearthly lustre. "Is it customary for a bridegroom to present a maiden with a locket? You tremble,—*You do love!* but not your wife, for whom your love is lawful,—deny it, if you dare; my own eyes gave me evidence that my husband was a perjurer, — a lying hypocrite, a dishonourable villain! Clarendon, the day is approaching when you will have to stand, side by side with me, at the tribunal of God, the bond-slave of an impure passion, the unabashed, undisguised vassal, of an unholy, sensual love. May God then have mercy on your soul! Oh, t'was a hellish sprite, to give thy hand to one, — thy heart to another. —Clarendon! Clarendon! no more can I name thee lover, no more can I call thee husband; — bear, henceforth, the name of fiend!—ay, fiend with an adamantine heart! Oh, Great, Almighty, and all powerful Creator!" continued Fanny, as kneeling on the ground she tore out large

handfuls of her hair, and gnashed her teeth in frantic agony,—"this is the punishment due to me, for having worshipped so intensely, so like a pagan, a mere mortal man. — I made an idol of my Algernon, — no longer mine, *her* Algernon. Woman! fond confiding woman! trust not that lying, false-hearted fiend named man. He sports with, then sickens of your love,—your adoration is turned into jest, — you are undone, and are driven unto madness. Oh! would that this hand which binds my aching side, were red-hot steel to sear my poor heart's core!"

But why write the ravings of the wretched wife? Reason, — that heavenly sense which distingushes man from brute, had fled from its beauteous tenement, and madness reigned;— life seemed ebbing fast from this angelic creature, and Algernon prayed for death to cease her agonizing writhings and excruciating tortures. Intense were the sufferings of the almost heart-broken husband to see his bride of a day stretched on the bed of death;—she who

had borne him such deep and passionate love, now calling on Heaven to curse Zoé and Algernon. The heavings of her snowy breast were suppressed by strappings of leather, — her exquisitely moulded arms were bruised and mangled by the strong graspings of the coarse hands of the village apothecary and the charwoman. Towards morning the sufferer ceased to rave; all around stood aghast, expecting death would release her from her mortal pangs. Tears trickled down the beholder's cheeks,—the hardest heart must have softened at the sight of such appalling misery. Fanny at length opened her once beautiful eyes, now sunk in their sockets and glazed. She sat up in the bed, and looked attentively at each of the horror-struck beings who encircled her; she then took off a Venetian chain, which hung round her swan-like throat; at the end was affixed a small miniature; she gazed on it earnestly for a few moments, and said, "Algernon! take back thy portrait!" Clarendon shrunk away, but Fanny handed the miniature to Zoé. She next drew

off her wedding ring, and with surprising strength snapped it in twain. "'Twas a fatal gift!" she murmured, as her head drooped on her bosom, and her tears flowed fast. These she quickly checked, and recovered her calmness.—Zoé now spoke:

"You charge me with a heinous crime, and one of which I am innocent; you accuse me of loving your husband."

"My life upon it,—'tis false!" burst forth Mrs. Ramsden: "the goddess of chastity was not more virtuous than is that maiden;—you wrong Algernon most basely;—he burns with no impure ardour for Zoé. He loved *once*, as man never loved before; that woman was Zoé's sister; she was too good to remain in this world. It pleased Heaven to deprive Algernon of his betrothed;—she died,—she died!"

"The tress of hair was hers!" sobbed out Zoé.

"It is still a deception!" said Fanny. "Mark me!—I am not mad now!—shall not be again;—I do not love now,—never can again.

Algernon Clarendon, rememberest thou the day I asked thee, if thy heart had *ever* worn love's fetters? thy answer rings yet in my ears, it was, 'Fanny, thou art my *first* and *only* love.' I replied, 'Then I promise to be thine.' Thy falsehood has cost me dear, — the fault was mine. Why did I love? oh Algernon! — Algernon! how totally for thyself was the idolatry, the intense love I bore thee! how I would have braved penury, scorn, disgrace, the world's contumely, all for thee, and should have spent a life of heavenly love, so thou had returned my adoration; but thou didst not. I am now dying — thank God for that! But Algernon!" and her beautiful face beamed with brilliancy, and a scornful smile curved her mouth: "Do not triumph in the idea that I depart this world with the foolish infatuation of still loving thee. No, — no, — I no longer love. Oh! again I thank thee, God, for that! All is not bitterness in this dark and solemn hour. Algernon Clarendon, farewell! — all — farewell! — may you meet with as peaceful a deathbed, as I have."

She sank back on her pillow; Clarendon took her hand, which she forcibly and quickly withdrew from his grasp.

"I am not thy *first* love, Algernon!"—She never spoke again,—her eyelids drooped,—all was over,—she was *dead.*

* * * * * *

TO THE READER.

Ceux qui aime à la folie, se marie avec raison,
L'amour est une maladie, dont l'Hymen est le guérison.

THE MYSTERY.

BY

HENRIETTA MARY BEAUCLERK.

What have we here? what meets our eye?
O, 'tis a tale of mystery!
Is it of goblin or of sprite,
That you have ventur'd thus to write?
Read, and my story will unfold
A tale that cannot be twice told.
A deed of darkness brought to light
Tho' long conceal'd from human sight.

THE MYSTERY.

It was late on a fine summer's evening, that a travelling carriage-and-four, followed by a barouche and pair,—both heavily laden, drove through the small village of Bere-Hacket in Dorsetshire, and entering a park two miles from it, stopped at a noble mansion known by the name of Orton Hall. A hatchment was placed over the portico, and the servants standing on the flight of steps, were habited in black, for the late occupier of this residence had only been dead two months. The coach-door was opened; a gentleman apparently about fifty years old ascended, followed by his wife, a middle aged person, a girl of seventeen, and two more of between eight and ten:—they were all attired in deep mourning. The barouche

was filled with maids and luggage, &c. The late Sir Geoffry Lonsdale having never married, at his death the whole of his valuable property was left to his nearest of kin, Mr. Lonsdale, who now came to reside on his family estate.

For some years before this occurrence, Mr. Lonsdale had lived at a small villa within a few miles of London, where, without the confinement of a metropolitan life, he had all the benefits of it. His eldest daughter, Laura, received instruction from all the best masters, and was as amiable as she was accomplished. Her features were small and regular; a pair of sparkling dark eyes lighted her countenance with no common brilliancy; her tall and slender figure seemed almost too much for the diminutive foot and ankle to support. Her frank good-natured manner pleased generally, and her two sisters regarded her as a species of idol. Mrs. Lonsdale had produced three sons—all of whom were dead; and her husband thought, with much regret, that if she had no more, the family estate he had just inherited would pass

into strange hands, as by a clause in his cousin's will no female could claim it.

On taking possession he determined not to dismiss any of the old domestics he found there; but to those who were unfit for service, or wished to retire, he allowed liberal pensions. Among the dependants of the deceased was a half-witted man of five-and-twenty, called Billy Grange, who much annoyed Mr. Lonsdale. He had been born on the estate, and both his parents dying when he was yet an infant, Sir Geoffry had protected and brought him up. He was said to be perfectly innocent, and his late master had the greatest confidence in him. During his last illness he could never be induced to leave his bed-side, attending him with the utmost care and attention. He shed no tear at his death, but from that time he was an altered being. He spoke to no one, hardly ate enough to support life, would rove away for days, and then returning perfectly exhausted, lie down at his late master's bed-room door. Mrs. Lonsdale regarded him with a sort of

horror she could in no way account for, and often hinted to her husband she should never feel comfortable as long as the idiot remained at Orton Hall. Laura, on the contrary, tried by every means in her power to assuage his grief, and in a short time she had the pleasure of seeing her efforts rewarded with success; his former cheerful habits returned; he no longer avoided mixing with his companions. His affection for Laura knew no bounds: in all her ramblings he accompanied her; if her young sisters were fatigued, carried them, and would climb the steepest mountain to procure her any moss or stone she expressed a wish to have.

Winter passed by, and the Lonsdales had become acquainted with most of the neighbouring gentry. Mrs. Lonsdale seldom quitted the house, her health being so very delicate. Laura frequently visited Mrs. Trenton, an old lady, who, with her son, a young man of two-and-twenty, and her daughter, resided within two miles of her father's house, near the town of Bradford Abbas. Nashbrook Priory was si-

tuated on a hill well sheltered by surrounding woods; the highly-cultivated pleasure-grounds descended to the river Ivel, which flowed for a mile through their park. Report said that Laura would soon become mistress of this delightful residence: however that might be, she was always warmly solicited to renew her visits, for she was a great favourite with Mrs. Trenton. Ann Trenton was a month older than herself, and in every way suited to be her friend. Arthur Trenton was doted on by his mother; he was tall, handsome, and to a cultivated mind, was added a great genius for music, which made him much liked by his fair neighbour Laura; yet, while she encouraged his acquaintance, taking great pleasure in his society, she never for a moment imagined any other feeling towards him than that of the most sincere friendship.

In the month of May, Mrs. Lonsdale became the mother of a son and heir; the event was celebrated with much rejoicing; and on Laura's birth-day, which was the first day in June, a

splendid ball was given, to which all the principal families in the neighbourhood were invited. A large party remained in the house to attend the christening of the young heir, who was named Hector Augustus. Mrs. Trenton, her son and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Sedburgh, a distant relation of Mrs. Londale's, and Sir Alfred Swancote, were among the number who witnessed the ceremony. The day after, they all took their leave, save Mr. Trenton, who was to stay dinner and afterwards walk home in the evening.

"I suspect as how we shall have a wedding very soon in this family," remarked one of the footmen as they were all assembled at supper.

"Aye," replied another, "Mr. Trenton seems very sweet on our young missus."

"Well, they'll make a handsome couple," chimed in the lady's-maid; "but, I say, Billy, what will you do without your companion? for you always go about after her."

A vacant stare was the sole reply this question obtained,—indeed, the person it was ad-

dressed to did not seem aware of the presence of any one.

"Good night, Trenton," said Mr. Lonsdale, as he accompanied his guest to the hall-door; it is a very fine night for your walk; I hope your family will not be alarmed at your not returning before. I had no idea it was so late, had you? it is past twelve."

"Indeed! I shall soon be at home if I go by the high road," replied Mr. Trenton. "But tell me at what hour you will be disengaged to-morrow, for I wish to speak very particularly to you." An hour was fixed, and the two friends separated.

As Mr. Lonsdale and his family were seated at breakfast the next morning, at about nine o'clock, a letter arrived from Mrs. Trenton, written in the greatest alarm, stating that her son had not returned the night before, and as he was always strictly punctual, the circumstance had made her feel very uneasy, as she feared he was either ill, or that some accident had happened to him, and begged Mr. Lonsdale

would send word immediately as to what had occurred.

"This is very extraordinary," remarked Mr. Lonsdale, as he finished reading the letter out loud; "I really hope nothing has befallen young Trenton; he was perfectly well last night when he took his leave, and indeed mentioned that he should call here this morning at eleven. Ring the bell, Laura, I will have my horse saddled and ride over to the Priory; but in the meantime send my servants about the neighbourhood to inquire after poor Trenton."

But all inquiries were useless; no clue could be obtained, however faint, to trace where the young man was. Mr. Lonsdale was the last person who had seen him: he repeated the conversation they had had together, on parting, to Mrs. Trenton, and they came to the conclusion, that he was detained forcibly, by parties expecting a large ransom would be offered for him. Accordingly Mr. Trenton declared that if any one could throw the smallest light upon the affair they should be rewarded by the sum

of one thousand pounds; but, notwithstanding this announcement, no information of any sort or kind could be afforded. The high road was carefully inspected, but if any struggle had taken place there, it could not have been discerned, as it had rained violently at five in the morning. Mrs. Trenton was suffering all this time the greatest agony and suspense of mind; the idea that her only son had been waylaid and murdered now firmly took possession of her, and she gave herself wholly up, to the full sway of maternal grief. The Lonsdales tried in every manner to console her, but the wretched mother was deaf to words of comfort; her heart was nearly broken. The once happy home was now a house of mourning, nothing but tears and lamentations were heard. The gay Ann Trenton was inconsolable, yet still she exerted herself so far, as to call at the residences and examine every person she thought likely to have seen her brother: but at last she was obliged to agree with Mr. Lonsdale in thinking that nothing but time could unravel this *mystery*. Months

passed by, still nothing was heard of Mr. Trenton; his mother appeared to be daily sinking, and indeed often declared that she should not long survive the blow. Laura spent most of her time with her, vainly striving to whisper hope, for she felt herself that Arthur Trenton was no more.

A general election was announced about this time. Mr. Lonsdale was warmly solicited on all sides for his vote, but his choice was already made in favour of Mr. Knighton, who, besides being a young man of great promise, was related to all the first families in the county. In the short time that Mr. Lonsdale had resided in Dorsetshire, he had become a great favourite, and was universally esteemed. The poor found in him a warm friend, who listened to their tales of distress and injury with patience, and where harm was done, procured them some redress. Mrs. Lonsdale and her daughter were much interested in the fate of the contest, and the windows of a house in Bradford, opposite the hustings, had been engaged for them to witness

the motley scene. The sum paid for the three windows they were to occupy, was thirty pounds, and the owner of the shop was so delighted at the arrangement, that he forsook his party, and voted for Mr. Knighton; so much for the honourable feelings of persons concerned in electioneering affairs. After a severe contest, Mr. Knighton was returned: the ceremony of chairing took place. Among the rabble that followed the hero of the day, the tall gaunt figure of Billy Grange might be discerned, decked with every colour of the rainbow, and dancing about in high glee. A splendid entertainment was given by the new member to his constituents, and he settled to dine with Mr. Lonsdale in two days, on his road to London. The former strongly urged his sleeping at Orton Hall, but Mr. Knighton excused himself on the plea, that he should start very early in the morning for town, and therefore preferred sleeping in the village of Bere-Hacket, where there was a very good inn. Two or three

friends were asked to meet him, and the evening passed off very pleasantly.

"I say, Billy," bawled one of the footmen in the ear of the unhappy idiot, "master wants you to be at the hall-door at eleven o'clock, with a lantern to light Mr. Knighton to the village,—mind you're punctual."

"Aye, never fear," replied the half-witted creature, as he quietly relapsed into the deep slumber he had been roused from.

"There's none other but Mr. Knighton going away to-night, is there?" demanded one of the servants.

"No; they all stay till to-morrow, and I fancy he'd like it better if he'd be going to stay, for they say as how he is courting Miss Laura."

"Well," replied the other, "I hope they'll make a go of it, for it was a monstrous uncod thing, t'other man of her's disappearing so."

"I hope," said Mr. Knighton, laughing as he was bidding his host good night, "that I shall

not be spirited away like our poor friend Trenton."

"Ah! that was a sad business," replied Mr. Lonsdale; "but I have ordered one of my servants to light you to the village; and with him you need not fear any thing, for he is strong and powerful."

"My dear Mr. Lonsdale, pray do not think I am afraid to go home alone; I really cannot think of taking one of your men out at this time of night. No, no, it is impossible: I was only joking, no one will think of harming me,—besides, it will be the worse for them if they attempt it."

All Mr. Lonsdale's entreaties were of no avail; and he saw Mr. Knighton depart alone with much regret, and not without a feeling of superstition that something would happen to him.

"Well, my dear Mr. Lonsdale," said Sir Alfred Swancote, when the former returned to the drawing-room. "You have done every thing in your power, and if Knighton is so very obstinate, he must abide by the consequences;

but I really hope he will get safe to the village,—however, to-morrow we shall know."

"I think we may consider that Mr. Knighton is safe on his road to London, for if any thing had occurred we should have heard of it before now; do you not agree with me, papa?"

"Indeed, my dear Laura, I hope so," replied Mr. Lonsdale; "but I have been very uneasy all night about him."

"Mr. Knighton's groom wishes to speak with you a moment, sir," exclaimed the servant, entering with alarm visibly marked on his pale face.

"Good God! what has happened?" demanded Mr. Lonsdale, rushing from the room, and following the servant into the hall, where he found the groom. "Come in here," said he, entering his library, and at the same time dismissing the attendant, who was likewise anxious to gain what information he could. "Now tell me quickly, what has happened to your master?"

"I don't know, I'm sure; I haven't seen master since he came to dine here yesterday,

and he told me to be ready at five this morning with the horses, as he should ride to town. So seeing he did not come, I inquired of the people of the inn, and they said he'd never been home the night before, and perhaps might have slept at the hall. So I waited till nine o'clock, thinking he might come after breakfast, and finding he didn't, I rode up here to inquire after him, when your servant told me as how he had left here last night, to go to the village."

All was consternation; it was evident that the same fate had befallen the young member, as that which had formerly been Mr. Trenton's. Mr. Lonsdale consulted his friends upon the best method of informing the parents of the unfortunate man, and they agreed it was better to wait till the evening, before they communicated with them. In the meantime, Sir Alfred was to ride to Blandford for the magistrate, and Mr. Lonsdale with his friends, were to examine the neighbourhood. At three o'clock, the magistrate arrived, when every person was separately examined.

"Where is the servant who was to light Mr. Knighton to the village?" asked the magistrate.

"Here," replied Mr. Lonsdale; "but he is an idiot, and I am afraid can tell you nothing."

Such was the case; for the poor creature remained in a corner of the room, his eyes and mouth wide open, and when he was questioned, terror seemed to deprive him of the little reason he possessed. At the close of this minute investigation, they were not a bit more advanced than at the beginning; nothing at all could be ascertained as to the disappearance of Mr. Knighton, and Mr. Lonsdale had the painful task of informing his parents of the melancholy catastrophe.

Mrs. Knighton would not believe that her son was no more, and vainly imagined he would soon return. Her husband, on the contrary, perceived by Mr. Lonsdale's manner, that he thought such a thing hopeless, and the tears streamed down his cheeks as he turned away to conceal from his wife the grief he could not suppress. Mr. Lonsdale recapitulated every

circumstance connected with this mysterious affair, and it was settled that Mr. Knighton should proceed as soon as he could to Orton Hall, and there join the officers of justice in their investigations of the mystery no one could solve.

The whole county took the alarm, and every where young Mr. Knighton's disappearance was the subject of conversation. The residents of Bere-Hacket decided, that Orton Hall was haunted, and some of them went so far as to declare, that at a certain hour, the ghosts might be seen walking through the park, and about the place. Not one of the servants dared venture out after dusk, many of them gave warning, and such a feeling of superstition pervaded the whole house, that Mrs. Lonsdale saw every chance of being very soon left without any domestics at all. Each morning brought a fresh account of some terrible spectre they had seen; no maid durst go about the house without a companion, as soon as night closed in. Shrieks were heard from the terrified domestics as they

pursued their different vocations. Mr. Lonsdale urged every plea to dispel their imaginary fears, —he even watched for a few nights to persuade them that the evil spirit existed only in their own minds; but all his arguments were vain. The county in the meantime, was in a state of excitement not to be described. Blandford being deprived of its member, another election took place, and Sir Alfred Swancote was returned. Mr. Knighton gave up the hope of ever seeing his only child again; not so his wife; each succeeding day, she exclaimed, "I am certain we shall hear of Henry to-day: he must come back soon."

Mr. Lonsdale was perfectly astonished when she pronounced this, for it was nearly a year since Mr. Trenton had been missing, and no tidings had ever been heard of him. As to poor Mrs. Trenton, she was entirely confined to her bed, and the only person she saw, was the clergyman of the parish, who attended her every day, and poured the consolations of religion into her broken spirit. Ann was much

changed, and no longer went out any where; indeed, her close attendance on her mother rendered such a thing impossible. The society in the county was completely altered; the friendly intercourse of neighbour to neighbour was stopped; no one ventured to leave Orton Hall at night, and at last, Mr. Lonsdale foreseeing that he should soon be completely isolated and forsaken, determined to go with his family to the Isle of Wight, till these unpleasant adventures should be forgotten. Mrs. Lonsdale and Laura were delighted at the change,—for the youthful spirit of the latter had become much depressed by the recent occurrences.

A house was engaged for them at Ryde, near the sea, where they removed as soon as possible; and on landing there, Mr. Lonsdale heard his wife say to Laura, "This is the first time I have ever felt happy since the birth of Hector." They were agreeably surprised at finding Sir Alfred Swancote and his mother residing in the island, where they intended to stay three

months. The Lonsdales' house was near theirs, and every day the families met either to join in some excursion on the water, or to view the different beauties in the Garden of England. Three months passed by, which appeared to Sir Alfred and Laura, not to be more than three weeks; when Mr. Lonsdale announced his intention of returning to Dorsetshire. Accordingly, the two familes separated, but with the idea of soon meeting again,—for Sir Alfred had become so captivated with the charms of the youthful Laura, that he had solicited her hand, and after his return from town, their marriage was to be solemnized in Dorsetshire.

With much regret, Mrs. Lonsdale again revisited Orton Hall; herself and children had derived much benefit from the invigorating air of the Isle of Wight, and her antipathy to the estate they had inherited, increased by absence. The county still wore the same air of apprehension and mystery, as when they left. No tidings had ever been learnt of Mr. Trenton or Mr. Knighton. Mrs. Trenton was still lingering

at death's door, and the doctors, though they could advise no remedy for her disorder, gave it as their opinion, she would soon be released from the ills of this world. Laura found the poor idiot, Billy Grange, much altered; his body was wasted away, and his intellects were even worse than before her departure; all efforts to rouse him were ineffectual; for hours he would sit with his head hid between his knees, and if disturbed, the fierce rolling of his eyes, with the passionate exclamations that burst from his lips, terrified even his benefactress.

From the following letter, Mrs. Lonsdale wrote on her return, to Mrs. Sedburgh, the state of her feelings may easily be seen:

"I do not ask you to come and see me, however great the enjoyment of your society would be at this moment, for this mysterious affair has not as yet been solved. How sincerely do I regret that Mr. Lonsdale ever had this place left him; the melancholy event that has happened, has completely disgusted me with Orton Hall. The only solace I find, is in my children.

I go out as little as possible. You know my horror for what is termed visiting, in the country, and as Laura is shortly to be married, there is no necessity for my so doing. Poor Mrs. Knighton, whose only joy was in her son,—the member for Blandford,—after having sustained hope for the space of four months, is now perfectly childish, yet still she indulges the idea that he is not dead." * * *

Winter now announced its approach with hard frosts and snow. Laura's marriage was announced to take place in a fortnight. Her intended husband became an inmate of Orton Hall, whilst his mother was to stay at his estate four miles from thence, till a few days before the ceremony, when she was expected to join the wedding party. All was joy, activity, and preparation; both Mr. and Mrs. Lonsdale approved of the match; the former liked it, because Sir Alfred was rich, of good family, and a member of Parliament; the latter, because her daughter would not go far away, and therefore she would not be deprived of her society.

A week before the wedding, the family was assembled one evening in the drawing-room, when a servant came in, and said, that Sir Alfred Swancote's coachman had just been to announce that Lady Swancote was very ill, and that he was going on to Bere-Hacket to fetch the doctor as quick as possible.

"Good gracious, how unfortunate!" exclaimed Sir Alfred, hastily rising: "excuse my departure, dearest Laura; but I must instantly go home to my mother. Heaven grant her illness is not dangerous!"

"Oh! surely you are not going to walk there alone to-night?" replied Laura, seizing hold of Sir Alfred's arm, as he was hurrying to the door. "Oh, no! you will be killed. Father! prevent him!"

"Laura, you surely would not wish to detain me, when my mother perhaps is dying?"

"Oh, no!" replied she, as the crystal drops flowed from her dark eyes; "but pray, for my sake, take some one with you; remember Mr. Trenton."

"Never fear, Laura, no one will harm me whilst I have this oak stick to defend myself. Come, dearest, this is silly to weep so; let go my hand, I shall be very safe." And kissing her fair brow, he gently disengaged his arm from her grasp, and placing her on a chair in the hall, rushed swiftly from the house, fearless of all danger. Quickly he traversed the park, and crossing the high road, entered a wood on the other side of it.

The air was cold and chilling; the moon at its full, cast a pale, sickly light through the trees, forming broad shadows. At any other time, Sir Alfred would have paused to observe the brightness of thousands of stars which darted over the deep grey sky,—one for a moment dimmed by some greater light, then again emitting its brilliancy, as it moved away; but he was now in no humour to gaze on the beauties of nature; his mind was occupied with other things; his mother's illness and Laura's fears were predominant. Suddenly the shadow of a man seemed to appear from behind, and

occasionally vanish. Was it fancy? no; surely another step but his might be heard on the hard dry ground. Sir Alfred turned to look: the oak stick he held, and which he had so relied on, was wrenched from his grasp by a force scarcely human; a cloud passed over the moon, but it emitted enough light for him to distinguish that some large stick or hammer was suspended ever his head; he snatched at the hand that held it, and diverted the blow. Fierce was the struggle, the momentary darkness rendered it more awful. Sir Alfred had to wrestle with an invisible foe. Now was he cast to the ground, while he felt the weight of his adversary press on his body; now did he feel an iron grasp encircle his throat, and almost put an end to life; now did he start from the ground, and shielding his head from the impending blow, hurl his enemy from him. All was total obscurity. Their hands and garments were so saturated with the blood that had been spilled, that they could not retrain their grasp. Sir Alfred could not rid himself of his unknown

foe,—one effort, and all was over. His adversary had clasped him round the waist, — Sir Alfred paused a second, — and the next he had cast himself against a tree with the stranger. No sound escaped his lips, — nought was heard save the deep quick respiration of Sir Alfred, and the rustling of the leaves as the cold night breeze moved them, making the scene more desolate. The strong arms that had held him in their grasp, gradually relaxed their hold, and Sir Alfred was once more free. The moon now appeared from behind the dark cloud that had lately hid its brightness, the rays descended through the almost leafless branches, and shed a broken light on the creature stretched at his feet. The man seemed tall, and formed for great strength; his jacket was covered with blood, which likewise prevented his features from being discovered. The crimson fluid streamed copiously from a deep wound on his temple; an occasional groan was the only sign that life was not extinct. Sir Alfred hesitated; should he leave this man to die from the wounds

he had inflicted on him? no; he could not do it. His strength was failing him, but a little exertion, and he might save one, who would have murdered him; so returning good for evil. He bound his handkerchief round the stranger's forehead, disengaged the huge hammer from his hand, — which in death he firmly clutched, — and half carrying, and partly dragging the body, he reached Orton Hall; with a last effort he rung the door bell, and weak with the loss of blood, fell fainting on the steps.

All slept within, save Laura: repose was banished from her frame; on her knees she was imploring the Divine Power to watch over, and protect her lover. The sounding of the bell broke through the silence that reigned around; hastily snatching the lamp that shed its pale yellow light, she passed quickly from her room, through the long dark passages leading to the spacious hall, and with a trembling hand, drew back the massive bolts that fastened the entrance; the light shone on the blood-stained face of Sir Alfred Swancote. She neither

shrieked nor fainted; but stooping down, endeavoured to raise him up. Mr. and Mrs. Lonsdale had both heard the bell, and fearing something had happened to Sir Alfred, they proceeded down stairs, where they found the group described. The alarm bell was rung, and in a short time most of the household were assembled, adding to the scene of confusion. Sir Alfred was conveyed to his apartment, followed by Mr. and Mrs. Lonsdale. Laura was prevailed upon to retire to her room, whilst the unknown foe was left to the care of the domestics, and when the blood was washed from his mangled face, they recognised the idiot Billy Grange! Restoratives were administered to both, which had the desired effect, and after some time, Sir Alfred was sufficiently recovered to relate the particulars of the attack that had been made on him. Mr. Lonsdale was called away to visit the other wounded person, who has been already mentioned; he maintained a sullen silence, apparently suffering much from the injuries he had received. His master im-

plored him to say, why he had so ill-treated Sir Alfred, and what his motive had been. Groans issued from the sufferer's mouth, as he vainly essayed to speak; some wine was given to him, and leaning towards Mr. Lonsdale, as if blessed with returning reason, he exclaimed;

"Think you it is strange, the mother should curse the wretch who robs her of her all! feelings may be hidden; but still they exist. Oh, that my arm could have proved as fatal to Sir Alfred, as it has done to those who are no more! Aye, you had a long and fruitless search; but no one ever imagined the *idiot* had aught to do in that transaction. I, who have been the laughing stock of the place, have likewise caused hot burning tears to flow, and the knowledge of it has pleased me. You need not fear," added he, as Mr. Lonsdale shrank from the bed-side, "if I wished, I could not harm you; that youngster has pretty nigh disabled me; he fought hard, dark as it was:—not so the others; one blow, and all was over; for fear the dead should tell tales, *this* settled the busi-

ness," and searching the pocket of his coat he pulled out a thick cord. "You know the ponds by the wood-side; well, the centre one is deep, and partly covered with rushes and weeds, *there* rest the remains of Mr. Trenton, and Mr. Knighton."

"Oh God!" exclaimed Mrs. Lonsdale, "is it indeed so? what could have tempted you to perpetrate such a crime? unhappy man!"

"Unhappy? true, I have failed in my last attempt, and Sir Alfred lives — Oh! that I had had strength to kill him, and then I should have died content; but now! the wretch will gain his object, and Laura will be his. *Fool* as I am, gratitude and affection still could prevail in my heart, yet was I thought insensible. The idiot that has been sneered at, could still love his benefactress: as the careful hen watches over and guards her young brood, so have I regarded *one* that is dearer to me than she can ever be to him, who will ere long call her wife! When sorrow pressed heavily on my feeble mind, her soft voice soothed the grief that others mocked

at, and said, 'the *fool* can cry as well as laugh.' For nights have I watched about the house, and during the day dogged the footsteps of my victims; fortune at last favoured me, and the intended husbands of my benefactress, perished by my hand."

"Silence! I will hear no more; to crime you have added deceit, and under the mask of idiotcy, have perpetrated deeds too horrid to be thought of. But justice shall be done at last. John," added he, "guard that ruffian well; I will send for the magistrate, and in the mean time watch him closely."

"Yes;" replied the drowsy servant, as his master locked the door on his departure, and sinking into an arm chair, he was soon absorbed in the sleep he had been roused from.

Mr. Lonsdale despatched a messenger to Bere-Hacket for the doctor, and to Blandford for the magistrate. Mrs. Lonsdale had dressed Sir Alfred's wounds, none of which were deep, and his faintness proceeded more from loss of blood, and over exertion, than from any danger.

There was no fever in his frame, and having taken a sleeping draught, he sank into a refreshing slumber. The doctor was at Lady Swancote's, and his return that night was uncertain. In three hours the magistrate arrived; Mr. Lonsdale informed him, in short, of what had occurred, and they proceeded together to the murderer's apartment. They unlocked the door, and entered. The servant was fast asleep; and hanging over the side of the bed, was the body of Billy Grange; with a knife that had been left in the room, he had stabbed himself to the heart!

The pond near the wood was searched, and the two bodies were found in a state of decomposition; by the different marks on the clothes they were distinguished, and the remains of each, sent to their respective homes. Mrs. Trenton beheld the corpse carried by four men coming up the park, and clasping her shrivelled hands, she exclaimed, "Thy will be done!" when Ann Trenton turned round, her mother was no more;—she was an orphan. Lady

Swancote's illness which had nigh caused her son's death, was nothing but spasms in her side,—a complaint she was liable to, and which by warm applications were soon removed. Sir Alfred recovered from the injuries he had received, and became the happy husband of Laura Lonsdale. Billy Grange was buried in unconsecrated ground, in a cross road, and with a stake driven through his body.—Thus perished the originator of "THE MYSTERY."

MY DAUGHTER JANE.

BY

CAROLINE FREDERICA BEAUCLERK.

The men are so tormenting, oh, how I hate them all!
They never ask my daughter Jane, to dance at any ball.
With other girls, night after night, I see men round me prance;
In vain I laugh, and fret and say, how *Jane* would like to dance.

Last Almack's ball, Jane looked so nice, dress'd en couleur de rose,
And yet I heard a chaperon say, "That quiz has *such* a nose!"
My daughter nearly swooned away, poor dear, she overheard
A vile fop add, "I vow she squints, and has a long black beard!"

Then next there came, an odious miss, who said, "You're very right,
Refusing ev'ry dance to join, this hot and sultry night."
Jane then advis'd *her* not to valse or galoppe any more;
"My dear," said she, "you quite forget, I'm not quite thirty-four!"

For hours on a dull bench I sat, I ach'd in every joint;
Tuft hunters all pursued their game, Jane could not make
one *point*.
When she some dashing captains spied, stuff'd out, and
all great *dears*,
At least she thought so, till one said, "By jove that old
one lears!"

Alas! poor Jane, she ne'er can get an active dancing
man;
They'll neither dance or flirt with her, or e'en pick up her
fan.
Oh the men are so tormenting! they have riven my heart's
core,
They've turn'd my daughter's hair quite grey, and she's
but thirty-four!

Vainly, alas! does Isidor entwine her brow with lilies,
Since gentlemen prefer to romp, with girls like scamp'ring
fillies.
Deuce take them all! do what I will, they won't ask Jane
to dance;
As partners she can ne'er obtain,—of a *husband* Jane's no
chance.

MATCH MAKING.

BY

HENRIETTA MARY BEAUCLERK.

Deep in my soul that tender secret dwells,
Lonely and lost to light for evermore,
Save when to thine my heart responsive swells,
Then trembles into silence as before.

BYRON.

"Love is a feeling none can well explain,
Though it prevails in every action of our life;
Love is a passion we defy in vain,
As it will come, despite of every strife.
Love is a passion then in some as pure,
As the fresh tear it causes oft to flow;
Love is a malady that nought can cure,
It is an ill that comes to high and low."

MSS.

MATCH MAKING.

"My dear Lord Woodford, we must go to town next week. I know your dislike to a London life; but now you must sacrifice your own private feelings for the good of your children. Gertrude was nineteen last month, and she has not been as yet presented in the world; it really is sad neglect on your part. It is true I have tried to remedy it by having visitors constantly here; but Sara, who is seventeen, is old enough to come out, and I can remain no longer in the country."

"For Heaven's sake, stop!" exclaimed Lord Woodford. "I am very willing to go to the expense of hiring a house in town for you, provided you will allow me to remain here."

Lady Woodford was satisfied, and speaking in a voice which very much resembled the crowing of a victorious cock, she thanked her husband for this fresh proof of his regard for his children; "but," added she, "my chief object for going to town, is to try and bring about a marriage between Gertrude and Lord Maurice. You shake your head, but I am certain, from what I saw during his stay here this winter, that he likes her. I must confess Gertrude did not behave at all well; she was always talking to that Italian Count you took up so warmly, and nothing would satisfy you but that he must stay here the whole of the winter. One thing is, that Lord Maurice liked him very much, and if he did think the Count admired her, it would only make him more anxious to marry her, for flirting at the right time often forwards a marriage, more than any attention or civility would. Lady Graham is moving heaven and earth to get Maurice for Lady Charlotte, and no wonder; he is a prize worth any one's trying for; but I am of opinion that Gertrude's youth and beauty

will have a better chance of wearing his coronet, than the middle-aged, red-haired daughter, of a fortune hunter. I shall not trouble myself this season about Sara; she is young, and can wait. Henry will be of age very soon, and I must try and find him a rich wife to repair the fortunes of our house! That will for the time monopolize my utmost talent, —for where I am to find him one, Heaven only knows, — really the nobility of the present day are a set of paupers!" Lady Woodford stopped, exhausted, and raising her eyes from a heap of Easter bills, perceived her husband buried in a pamphlet on the advantages of machines for breaking stones, and was evidently none the wiser for her learned dissertation; but having gained her point, she was in too good a humour to quarrel with him; and quitting the large arm chair in which she had so ably spoken, she left the room to write and engage a house in London.

The girls, (as their brother the Honourable Henry Morley called them,) were delighted at

the prospect of being introduced in the beau-monde. Gertrude in particular, was aux trans-ports; the house could not contain her, and mounting a pony she galloped to the vicarage before Lady Woodford could inform her of all her plans. In a few moments Gertrude had told her good news to the vicar's three daughters, whom she regarded almost as sisters. They re-gretted her intended departure extremely; but Gertrude consoled them, by promising to write frequently, and rising, put a stop to a conversa-tion, which now that her first joy was over, became fatiguing in the extreme to her restless spirit, and wishing the trio good-bye, she was preparing to remount her pony, when a voice which she immediately recognized as that of Sidney Wells's, (the vicar's only son,) begged her to stop for one moment. In an instant he was at her side, and though Gertrude ob-served his more than usual paleness, she was perfectly unaware of the cause.

"Pardon me, Miss Morley," said he, "for interrupting you; but I hear from your father

that you are going soon to leave this place; perhaps this will be the last time I shall ever see you, unless, — unless you will deign to accept my hand. I know you think me mad to propose such a thing; but, oh! if you only knew how deeply, how devotedly, I have loved, my conduct would no longer appear foolish. I am conscious how different our stations in life are. You are the beautiful, accomplished, and wealthy daughter of a noble baron; I the low-born, unknown son of a country vicar; yet my heart beats as warmly as that of one possessed of rank and riches."

"Hold! Mr. Wells, I would not spurn you on account of your poverty, or humble birth; but it is useless thinking I ever can be your wife. I acknowledge I never could endure staying all my life in the country. No; take the advice of a true friend and marry one possessing more your own taste than I do. Adieu! we go to town next week, and I hope by the time we return, Gertrude Morley, with all her faults, will cease to hold any sway over your mind."

Something like a tear dimmed for awhile the brightness of her eye, as waving her hand she galloped down the field in which the vicarage stood. The globule which had started to her eye now found its way unchecked down her fair cheek; she thought of the pain she had unwillingly given one who had ever been most kind to her. "Yet, after all," murmured she, "it was better to be frank; how could he suppose for a moment that my mother would accept him as a son-in-law? no, no, I fear me that none but him I cannot love, will ever sue me with success." This last sentence was accompanied by a deep sigh; a melancholy look stole over her fair face, and in the weeping form that now presented itself to view, no one could have recognised that cheerful being who seemed but a short time ago to possess no other feeling than joy.

Sidney Wells, in the meantime, remained rooted to the spot where his hopes of bliss had vanished for ever. His strained eyeballs in vain strove to catch a last glimpse of Gertrude, as

she faded from his view. "Oh Gertrude!" exclaimed he, "you little know the bitter pang you have caused me. Now have you parted for ever with a person hateful to your most tender feelings; never again shall you have it in your power to spurn me. No; my proud spirit rebels against such humiliation. Rank! thou bane of human happiness, wherefore was such a distinction ever known! Because my birth is humble, am I less worthy the love of the high-born Gertrude than any noble in the land? Does rank bring happiness? Does wealth bring content? Oh! surely it must, if the poor and lowly can feel so much," and clenching his hands he wept in all the bitterness of unrequited love.

Great was the surprise of the inhabitants of the West Riding to read in the weekly paper that "Lord and Lady Woodford and family had left Yorkshire for their house in town," where they meant to reside for some months. The paper further stated, that the cause of the noble family visiting the metropolis, was the

celebration of their eldest daughter's approaching nuptials with the Earl Maurice, one of the richest peers in England. It was not till the end of the week, that an antiquated spinster, who had read the paper eight times over, discovered in the midst of a column that, Sidney Wells, gent., only son of the Reverend J. Wells, had enlisted as private in the regiment of foot about to sail for India. Various were the surmises this intelligence gave rise to. Had he quarrelled with his father? Was he out of his mind to go as a private to India for eighteen years, where so many died? The gossips at last came to the conclusion, that Mr. Sidney Wells had gambled so much, and had incurred such heavy debts at times, and at places unknown to them, that to prevent incarceration in the county jail, he had levanted. The report was then circulated that the Reverend J. Wells, vicar of Hadborn, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, was so embarrassed in his circumstances, that the only means he had of satisfying his

creditors, arose from the stipend of a small vicarage.

The last thought Gertrude gave to Sidney Wells was consoling in the extreme to her own mind. She fancied his was a love that absence would diminish, and finally check. She knew not the agony he was enduring, and little did she imagine, while resting at her ease in their splendid town mansion, that her rejected lover, for her sake, was tossing on the troubled waters of the wide ocean, perhaps doomed soon to rest for ever in the treacherous element on which he sailed. The Miss Morleys' début was perfect. The severest critics could not discover any fault in their graceful figures. Some admired the dark brown eyes and slender taille of Sara, more than the bright blue eyes, and full contour of her sister; all agreed they were lovely.

Lady Woodford's first care on her arrival in town, was to be presented at court; for this purpose she applied to her sister Lady Elverton,

who was renowned in London for her good balls and parties. Lady Woodford determined not to see too much of her sister, as having three daughters out, and two in the school-room, they might clash with her girls. It was astonishing the degree of complaisance the men showed to these graces. Of a morning, their drawing-room was crowded ; out riding in the noon, they were always escorted by some half-dozen cavaliers, anxious to be invited to dinner or to have an opera ticket presented to them. In the evening, at the balls, the Lady Barnetts were never known to remain seated five minutes all night ; they seemed to be a kind of mania. Lord Elverton had been dead five years, and his only son, a youth of fifteen, was studying with a tutor at Munich, where he had been sent on account of delicate health. The eldest Lady, Fanny, was tall, thin, and termed by the world a very lady-like looking person. She possessed a small quantity of what is generally considered the greatest ornament of beauty,— according to Mr. Rowland, — namely, a good head of hair ;

and though she declared it was a proof of low birth to have a luxuriant covering for the head, she was guilty of robbing the dead to supply what she had not. Lady Fanny's hand and arm was considered perfect, and a sure way of being invited to her mother's balls was to mention that the party interested had purchased a cast of it, at Sarti's, the Italian sculptor. The second, Lady Sophia, was perfectly different in her manner, appearance, and disposition to her sisters. She had always been reckoned very plain in her family, and from the frequent hints and cuts that had been thrown out, her mind was completely soured. Aware of her extreme ugliness, she set up for being very clever, and claimed the privilege of saying whatever came uppermost in her thoughts. Lady Amelia was a general favourite; the world forgot in her good-nature, the coldness of one sister, and the pertness of the other. She was universally allowed to be very pretty, none of her features were remarkable for beauty; but the tout ensemble formed an agreeable and lively counte-

nance. The Miss Morleys soon declared their preference for Amelia; the gentle spirit of Sara shrank from the rudeness of Sophia, and the warm hearted Gertrude openly condemned the cold formal manner of Fanny. At the drawing-room, Lady Woodford met with numerous friends she had been acquainted with formerly; but how changed were they! The beautiful Julia Sinclair was transformed into the matron-looking Mrs. Keith, with four daughters and six sons, all bearing a dreadful likeness to their hideous father. Harriet West,—who had never been remarkable for any great share of personal attractions, now that she wore a turban, and had passed the age of forty,—was considered very handsome as Lady Kirton; besides, she had nearly the best set of diamonds of any one in London. The clever and talented Louisa Walton had never been able to convince any man of her great worth, and at the present time was at that hopeful age when she imagined herself too young to be called an old maid,—a title the world had bestowed on her long since. Miss

Walton was a regular diner out, being asked for the purpose of making the dinner pass off pleasantly ; consequently her stock of puns, sayings, and conundrums, were as antique as herself. She played badly on the piano-forte, sung like one of the feline species chaunting a dirge, made the strings of the harp fall a note at her touch, and nearly put the guitar in hysterics. The only person Lady Woodford found who retained any degree of her former looks, was Lady Caroline Brudenell ; in days of yore, she had been very intimate with her, and now eagerly renewed the acquaintance. There were two things in Lady Caroline's favour in the eyes of Lady Woodford ; she had no daughters, and was a widow.

A month after her arrival in London she wrote the following epistle to Lord Woodford, who after the drawing-room, had retired into the country.

MY DEAR HUSBAND,

The girls' début in London has been crowned

with success. I did not think they would have created so much sensation. The trouble I have had to get invitations to all the balls, is astonishing; the set of people having entirely changed since I was in town twenty years ago. Parties have increased wonderfully; in my time there were three Almack's in the season, the tickets one guinea, and afterwards a very good supper. Now the Almack's are held once a week, price of your ticket, if you take a set, seven and sixpence a-piece. No refreshment, save some lemonade, — sour enough to give the cholera,—and chalk and water, dignified by the name of tea. Altogether, they are much gone off. Country dances are quite out of fashion; the mania now are galoppes: I know not how to describe it; couples run up and down the room without any settled figure; the concussions are sometimes dreadful,—I do not admire it; but I hear every one saying it is delightful. Lady Caroline Brudenell tells me it is positively necessary I should give a ball; she has promised to invite the company, as I am not acquainted

with the set at present going. I have fixed it for this day three weeks, and think it will be a very good one. Numbers of cards are left daily, but they are names I never heard of before; I suppose they are friends of Lady Caroline's, she has introduced a great many of them to me; but I get quite confused with all the faces. Henry has been of great use, introducing partners to the girls; they are very popular, and know nearly all the young men in London. Gertrude, I think, is the most admired, perhaps, because she has higher spirits than Sara, who is looking thin; but that is likely to be occasioned by the late hours we keep. I can assure you that ever since I have been in town we have never been in bed till past five in the morning; Saturdays and Sundays excepted. Lord Maurice has not yet returned from Paris, but is expected daily. I am sorry to tell you that Count Alberti is in London, and paying great attention to Gertrude, which she does not seem by any means to dislike. This must all be put a stop to before Lord Maurice comes to

town, as he will be more difficult to manage here than in the country. Henry introduced Lord Ramsay, a great friend of his, to me; he is tall, thin, good-looking, but has not much to say for himself. We dine to-night at my sister's, who has a ball in the evening. I make a point not to go there too frequently, — you know my reasons. Tell Slater to send up as many plants as he can to ornament my house the night of the ball, and to come himself, as he may be of use. I will write soon. Believe me, &c., &c.

SARA ISABELLA WOODFORD.

P.S. By Lady Caroline's advice, I have taken an opera box for the season, at four hundred guineas, which I do not think extravagant, as it is in the best part of the house.

That night Lady Elverton gave a splendid ball at her house in Grosvenor Square, where all the rank, beauty, and fashion, in the metro-

polis presided. "I declare every one in London is here!" exclaimed Lady Charlotte Brampton, to a very cross-looking chaperon. "I never saw such a crowd, — it is impossible to dance; but tell me who is that girl in white, with a red wreath, standing near Lady Amelia Barnett?"

"Surely you know her," replied Mrs. Weston; "it is Sara Morley, Lady Woodford's youngest daughter. I never saw her looking so well; and I fancy it is not a little owing to the presence of Lord Maurice, with whom she is dancing." Lady Charlotte frowned and turned away.

"Lady Woodford, allow me to congratulate you on the two marriages that I hear are about to take place in your family."

"Indeed, Sir James, you are mistaken; neither of my daughters are going to be married; they are only just come out."

"I beg your pardon, Lady Woodford; but Lady Caroline Brudenell told me Miss Morley

was going to marry Count Alberti, the handsome foreigner, and that your second daughter was to be united to Lord Maurice."

It is impossible to describe the look Lady Woodford gave Sir James; for a phrenologist it would have been a difficult task to have decided the different feelings and emotions visibly acting on her countenance. No one feeling predominated; it was a compound of every horror portrayed in one look. She had not as yet learned that art which all good chaperons must possess, whether natural or acquired, namely, of hiding her own feelings; and Sir James's *mal-à-propos* speech added to a violent indigestion caused by the dinner being overdressed, roused her ladyship's temper to such a pitch, that seeing a small opening in the crowd before him, Sir James rushed forward and arrived in the centre of the room in time to be stretched on the floor, by the combined exertions of the animated Miss Ann Irum, and the splendid waltzer Captain Netherby. The fallen hero was speedily succoured, and the men, to

show their great wit, repeated the singularly new quotation of "Richard is himself again." Every one reads Shakspeare, some if they do not possess patience enough to peruse the whole, dive into a very useful publication entitled "Elegant Extracts," and there find pointed out to their notice, the most famous speeches of the above-named author, headed by explanatory titles as to the sense of the quotations. All wish to shine without much trouble, all learn from the same book, and all repeat the same speeches, till the ear is sick, with—"Oh that I were a glove upon that hand!"—"Sweets to the sweet,"—"Who steals my purse, steals trash," &c.

Towards the end of the ball, Lady Fanny, who piqued herself particularly on the way in which she executed the Mazourka, proposed one, and accordingly it was formed, but one couple was wanting. "Where is Gertrude Morley?" exclaimed Lady Fanny, "I know she dances it; do fetch her, Lord Maurice." His lordship obeyed and found Lady Woodford and her

daughters in the cloak-room in the act of retiring. Gertrude joyfully assented to join in the dance, and Lady Woodford, thinking her daughter was engaged to Lord Maurice, followed them to the scene of action, where, to her great surprise, she saw Count Alberti lead off the first figure with Gertrude, whilst Lord Maurice followed with Lady Amelia. Every one knows the length of a Mazourka; the eternal unchanging tune, — the measured step declares the feeling of the country in which it originated. Lady Woodford thought it interminable, and at six in the morning, was just courting the drowsy god.

A week after this, Lady Woodford, having desired not to be disturbed, conducted Lady Caroline Brudenell into her private sitting-room, and commenced the negotiation of a marriage she had long had in view. Neither more nor less,—she had offered her a husband in the person of the Honourable Henry Morley.

"Has your son desired you to speak to me on this subject?" replied Lady Caroline, rather

astonished at this proposal, which did not at all meet her plans, as she intended marrying an earl, or marquis, at least, if tempted to divide her fourteen thousand a-year with a second husband.

"Henry, certainly, has never authorised me to mention it; but I am sure he is only waiting a favourable opportunity to declare himself your devoted admirer. Our long acquaintance justifies me, I think, in telling you how much Lord Woodford and myself would like such an alliance; you are the only person I know, that I should approve my son marrying."

Lady Caroline gave no definite answer, talked of her dislike to marrying again, and what the world would say to her choosing so young a man, and the *tête à tête* ended with her promising to dine with Lady Woodford at six o'clock.

"Oh mamma! Lord Maurice has taken a box at Drury Lane, and hopes we will go there to-night, to see Malibran in 'Fidelio,'" said Gertrude, as Lady Woodford entered the room,

after her interview with Lady Caroline Brudenell,—"and begs you will ask any of your friends. He invited Lord Ramsay and my brother who met him here this morning."

Lady Woodford was silently delighted:—all had turned out for the best. It was evident Lord Maurice had procured the box for Gertrude, who a short time since, had expressed a wish to see that first-rate performer, Malibran; and perhaps he intended to avail himself of that opportunity to offer her his hand.

Six o'clock came,—no Lady Caroline; half past six,—seven,—still she tarried; at last Lady Woodford lost all patience, and began dinner. Seeing there was no chance of her coming, she sent her a note explaining the case, and begging her to follow them to the theatre as soon as possible. The first act of Fidelio was over, when they arrived, and in a short time Lord Maurice entered, accompanied by Lady Woodford's *bête noir*, Count Alberti, and Lord Ramsay. To her great horror, the Count seated himself by Gertrude, and Lord Maurice

by Sara; in vain, she fidgetted from place to place, complaining that here she could not see; that there the foot lights came in her eyes, and that such a draft came from the stage, she was certain she should have a stiff neck; but with all her manœuvres she could not detach the Count from Gertrude's side. The second act began, and the beautiful acting and singing of Malibran rivetted every eye, and silenced every murmur. Notwithstanding the effect Schroeder Devrient produced in the part of Fidelio, impartial critics have declared that Malibran has made the character quite her own. The tender, impassioned manner, in which she exclaimed, "I am his wife!" produced an almost electric effect upon the audience, who rewarded the efforts of this accomplished and fascinating singer, with thunders of applause. At the end of the opera, Lady Caroline Brudenell arrived, with a whole string of excuses and apologies; said her coach had been nearly broken, — that she had mistaken the dinner-hour, — thanked Lord Maurice for inviting her,—and hoped the opera

would begin soon. Her vexation was great on hearing it was over, as she preferred Malibran a thousand times to Grisi.

"But tell me, Gertrude, who is that bowing to you on the opposite side of the house? I am so blind, I cannot see?"

"Oh! it is Lady Elverton and her daughters; I must go and see them," exclaimed Lord Maurice, darting out of the box, before Lady Woodford could prevent him, and it was with feelings of regret, but of a different sort, that Sara and herself beheld him seat himself next to Lady Amelia.

Lady Woodford's temper was spoilt for the night, and not even the return of Lord Maurice some time after, could restore her former good humour; every thing had gone wrong. Lady Caroline flirted unusually with Lord Ramsay; Sara looked distracted; Gertrude appeared perfectly unconscious of any one's presence but Count Alberti. Henry Morley declared the afterpiece was wretched stuff, and that he should go and see if Lady Elverton would ask

him to supper. Lady Woodford complained of a violent head-ache, and giving the signal of departure, retired very ill-satisfied with the evening, and fully convinced that the anticipation of a pleasure is often greater than the enjoyment of the reality. The next morning, at breakfast, Lady Woodford informed Gertrude she was much displeased with her behaviour of the night before. "The Count is nothing but a common adventurer, and who knows but what he may have been a shoe-maker in Italy. It really is too bad wasting your time on one, who only courts you because he thinks you have money; but I now tell you, I never will give you one shilling if you marry that man."

Lady Woodford was completely silenced when Gertrude replied, "I do not think it very probable that Lord Maurice would be on such intimate terms with the Count, if he were of such low origin."

The post came in, and a letter from her husband concealed Lady Woodford's embarrassment.

"Your father is coming to town the beginning of next week, and intends staying for the ball, which I think is quite unnecessary; he knows no one, and people will be asking who he is. Oh, dear! this is very dreadful! The ship Sidney Wells went out to India in, has been wrecked, and all on board perished; his father is dead of grief, and the three girls are left perfect beggars." A loud sob from Gertrude interrupted Lady Woodford, who looking up, perceived her rushing from the room, crying violently. "For goodness sake, Sara, go and see what has happened to your sister, really she has grown so very odd lately!" Sara did not wait another summons, and found Gertrude weeping most bitterly in her room.

"Dearest Gertrude, what is the matter, are you unwell? tell me what I can do to relieve your distress."

Gertrude only replied by loud sobs, which seemed to shake her very frame; but at last, soothed by the kindness of her sister, she related her interview with Sidney Wells and her

refusal of him. "Yet if I had accepted him, I should have been most guilty, loving another as I do. Start not, Sara, at what I tell you, I never can marry any one but Count Alberti. Yet, see the utter hopelessness of my love; my mother detests him. Oh, Sidney! the wrong I did thee, is doubly repaid by my present sufferings; but to think I have been the cause of two persons' death, whom I so esteemed, oh, it is madness! The name of murderer is now branded on my forehead; his orphan daughters; his sisters stand before me, and accuse me of their loss; the sea will cast up its victim to appear in judgment,—all will unite to destroy me!"

"It is useless exciting yourself so much, Gertrude, you are not to blame; be assured, you never could have married Sidney Wells; in every respect he was unfit to be your husband; do not therefore accuse yourself of his death. Poor Fanny Wells and her sisters must be in great affliction at being deprived of their father, whom they loved so dearly; and with-

out friends,—what will become of them? But in the midst of trouble, hope will shine through and lighten our cares. Before we came to town, papa gave me two hundred pounds; half of it is untouched; suppose then, dear sister, we send this privately to them, it will at least serve for present necessities."

"Oh Sara! how every thing reproaches me. My father gave me the same sum, and it is all squandered. I fear to ask my mother for more, as she might inquire the cause, and reproach me for my foolishness." Gertrude felt too unwell to go to the opera that night, but begged her mother and Sara would attend. The latter went with the cheerfulness arising from having performed a good action; for, immediately after her conversation with Gertrude, she had forwarded the money to the Miss Wells, with a very kind letter signed "A true Friend."

Lady Woodford attributed her eldest daughter's sudden indisposition to the conversation they had had about Count Alberti, and blamed herself for being so harsh. They found Lady

Caroline Brudenell established in the opera box with Lord Ramsay, who was so enrapt gazing at the fair creature he was speaking to, that he did not perceive Lady Woodford's entrance till the shutting of the door roused him from his agreeable *tête à tête*. Lady Caroline was full of kind inquiries about Gertrude; fancied her head-ache proceeded from the heat of the theatre the night before, and gave a whole list of remedies that had been prescribed for her. This was all said in a hurried and unconnected manner, and though her flushed cheeks, and sparkling eyes were sufficient signs of something extraordinary having taken place, Lady Woodford never for a moment imagined the truth. A suspicion flashed across her mind that Lady Caroline might wish to marry Lord Ramsay, but she was confident he would never think of sacrificing himself to a person thirteen years his senior. Yet, during the evening, he never once quitted her side, and though numerous visitors came, he never retired till Lady Caroline was handed to her carriage by him.

Sara's wandering eye perceived Lord Maurice established in Lady Elverton's box, and fancied he only spoke to Lady Amelia; but she might be mistaken. On leaving the opera, Lady Woodford heard Lord Maurice say in reply to some question, "Oh! it is Lady Woodford's youngest daughter; is she not lovely? but . . ." she heard no more, for the noise of the footmen, mingled with the shouts of link boys, rendered such a thing impossible. By that single "but" she concluded, Lord Maurice meant to declare his preference for Gertrude, and was satisfied. Sara heard the speech, as the deep blush it called up plainly showed. The link boy to all his speeches of "Bless your honour, and the young lady; sure you'll not forget poor Jack," had no reply, save the elevation of the window glass with a jirk so sudden, that it threatened instant destruction to the clear crystal.

Gertrude was sufficiently recovered the next day to accompany her mother and sister to that fashionable resort of a Sunday, the Zoolo-

gical Gardens. Lady Woodford was a subscriber, and was passing in when Lady Caroline Brudenell ran after her, dragging Lord Ramsay by the arm, and begging for a ticket.

"You don't know what I have endured, standing here for more than an hour, with the broiling sun on my head; and really the people are so rude, pushing forward, that I am bruised all over."

"I am very sorry, my dear Lady Caroline, but I have only three tickets for the girls and myself; but Henry is a subscriber, and perhaps can assist you."

Henry Morley was solicited, but he had already promised them to two friends he was to pass in. Poor Lady Caroline was in an agony. At last, after waiting another hour, and suffering her feet to be trod upon, her chip hat,—Devy's last make, — knocked in at the side of the crown, and her canzou, worth at least sixteen guineas, torn by the means of a descending parasol,—a person, who appeared to be a retired grocer, or of that calibre, kindly released her

from her troubles, by giving her two tickets. Lady Woodford, in the meantime, had been vainly trying to obtain a seat in the gardens, and at last was obliged to content herself with leaning against the iron chains that encircled the monkeys' cages. On all sides she was assailed with, "Lady Woodford, will you allow me to introduce a very great friend of mine to you, who is particularly anxious to go to your ball;" and forthwith, bows were made, introductions gone through, and invitations given, before Lady Woodford, who was getting quite bewildered, discovered that her daughters were not with her.

"Oh! you need not be at all anxious about your girls," exclaimed Mrs. Keith, coming up with four of her own, "for I just met them walking with Lord Maurice, who I think will take every care of them, as I hear he is soon to be very nearly allied with your family."

Lady Woodford put on a very mysterious pleased look, and was preparing to answer, when Mrs. Keith again broke forth :—

"By the bye, my dear Lady Woodford, I have a great favour to request. You know Mr. Turnor, don't you? Well, your daughters must; he is in the eighty-seventh, and the most agreeable man I am acquainted with. Will you invite him to your ball? He will be such an acquisition, for he is such a good dancer; and to tell the truth, I think he is desperately in love with my eldest daughter Ann; but unfortunately, we go out of town next week; yours is the only ball we are invited to, and if I cannot get him to propose there, all hope is over, as he goes to India next month."

Lady Woodford, who had carried invitations about her for a month, gave Mrs. Keith one, making the reflection that the ball would be filled with every one's friends but her own. Lady Caroline Brudenell had invited two hundred people; the Elvertons had asked what they termed sixty dancing men, all fit for action, being neither blind, lame, deaf, or dumb. Her son had invited fifty of his friends, and the number of invitations given to strangers, to her

daughters' partners, with five or six old friends of her own, amounted to one hundred and fifty more. Gertrude and Sara joined her, with Lord Maurice, and Count Alberti. Lady Woodford contented herself with coldly bowing to the latter, and greeting the former cordially, for the speech of the previous night was fresh in her mind.

"Who is Henry walking with?" asked Lady Woodford, of her daughter.

"I am sure I do not know; I have seen them often before," replied Gertrude, "but I dare say Lady Caroline can tell us."

"Oh yes!" exclaimed she, coming up with Lord Ramsay, who looked nearly as tired as herself; "it is the great beauty every one is raving about. I have asked her to your ball, for she is quite the 'ton.' People have taken her and her mother up amazingly, since they have become so rich. You have heard of Mr. Parker Williamson, the wholesale linen-draper? —well, this is his daughter: he died two years ago, and left her all his property, and the world

says, your son is to marry her." Lady Woodford stood aghast at this information; the idea that the house of Morley should ever be allied to a possessor of the plebeian name of Williamson: oh! it was too much for her to endure. Lady Caroline perceived the shaft had reached its destined place, and was satisfied.

The long wished-for day of the ball at length arrived, and Lady Woodford's house, in Park Lane, was undergoing every necessary preparation. Lord Woodford came by the stage-coach to town, but his wife was too busy to heed him. He embraced his daughters affectionately, and was much struck with Sara's altered appearance; she had always been very delicate, but now seemed half the size she was on her leaving the country. Sara declared she felt perfectly well, but rather fatigued by the constant dissipation. To change the subject, she inquired after the Miss Wells's, and both were delighted to hear they were staying at Hornby Castle.

Gertrude went with a gayer heart than usual

to dress for the ball, at which she anticipated such pleasure: the Miss Wells's were safe under her father's roof, and there, she was sure, they would ever find a warm welcome. One ball is like another, all are equally entertaining to those who are happy: but Lady Woodford had never before felt so miserable. Every one congratulated her on Gertrude's approaching marriage with Count Alberti. Her son was devoted to Miss Parker Williamson, Lord Ramsay to Lady Caroline Brudenell; and though she had beforehand informed Lord Woodford how she wished the parties to be coupled, he seemed to forward the present state of affairs, by getting introduced to Miss Parker Williamson, and encouraging Count Alberti in speaking to Gertrude. Mrs. Keith was in high glee; Mr. Turnor had proposed to her daughter; the wedding was to take place immediately, for he did not intend selling out of the army, and they were going to India: Ann, perhaps, would be tempted to take her sister with her as a companion, and who knew

but what she might get a husband there, and then there would be only two left to provide for. Lady Woodford had to bear all this tirade with patience, and was congratulating Mrs. Keith on the intended match, when a crash from below spell-bound every tongue. The cause was soon known: — Mrs. Parker Williamson had been sitting in the supper room, on the edge of a small table, covered with china plates and dishes; the weight had proved too much for its strength, and Mrs. Parker Williamson found herself suddenly seated on the ground, with strawberries, cotelets, the remains of hot and cold chickens, white soups, dishes, tureens, &c. &c., strewed promiscuously over her person. All endeavours to extricate her were for some time fruitless, and when, at last, the task was accomplished, it was as much as Lord Woodford, and his son could do, to prevent themselves from laughing at the extraordinary sight she presented. The body of a foul hung by a claw to her sleeve, the bows on her dress were crammed with peeches, potatoes, &c., her

gloves and arms were alternately crimson and white, from the mixture of strawberries, soup, and cream, with which they were covered; not a part of her dress was free from the supper she had so amply shared, and as she proceeded to Lady Woodford's dressing-room, accompanied by her daughter, and Miss Morley, the gravy and soup kept dripping from her dress all the way. Lady Woodford was in agonies at this misfortune: she dreaded seeing a flaming account of it, with the vulgar name of the principal performer, in the Morning Post, or Court Journal; besides, the report was circulating, that Mrs. Parker Williamson had been indulging rather too freely in a certain rose-colour sparkling drink, which was said to be the cause of the accident. "This comes," thought she, "of letting other people invite the company. Lady Caroline shall answer for this."

The morrow came, and with anxious trepidation: Lady Woodford sent for the Morning Post into her dressing-room, to read the account of her ball. It took up one whole column, and

was headed by, " Lady Woodford's grand ball, in Park Lane. — Last night, Lady Woodford's house, in Park Lane, presented a gay and brilliant scene ; her ladyship gave her first grand ball this season, on which occasion, the whole of her splendid mansion was thrown open to receive all the rank, beauty, and fashion, in London." Then followed a long description of the suite of apartments, the spacious dancing room, the well-filled conservatory, the lofty hall, &c., &c., which Lady Woodford found very difficult to believe was the house in which she resided, so much had the paper enlarged and added to it. " The Miss Morleys were, however, the attraction of the evening ; these young ladies are said to be as amiable and accomplished as they are lovely. We regret to state that the festivities of the evening terminated with an accident, that has every appearance of being fatal in the end. Miss Parker Williamson, a young lady of great personal attractions, was leaning against the supper table, when, owing to some unforeseen chance, the table gave way,

and the unfortunate individual was nearly covered with the things on it. A gold candelabra fell on Miss Parker Williamson's head, and, we hear, fractured her skull. The unhappy lady was carried, insensible, from the room, and the first medical assistance procured, but no hope of her recovery is entertained. What makes the occurrence more distressing, is, that Miss Parker Williamson was about to be united to the only son of the noble host, a very promising young man, of five-and-twenty; his distress may more easily be imagined than described: the greatest apprehension is entertained for his intellects, so deeply has this circumstance affected him." — Three weeks passed by; Mrs. Parker Williamson had recovered from her accident, and was as noisy and vulgar as ever. Lady Woodford and her daughters had been to every party given, and heard, with much regret, Lord Woodford intended they should leave town in a short time. Lady Woodford rebelled strongly against this determination, but to no avail; her husband was getting much alarmed

at Sara's altered looks, and fancied country air would be of benefit to her. London was thinning rapidly, Lady Elverton and the Lady Barnetts were gone to Leamington, Lord Maurice had left town, Lady Kirton was at Brighton, Mrs. Turnor had sailed with her husband, and the whole regiment of the eighty-seventh, to India. Mrs. Keith had pursued a young Scotch laird to the Highlands, in the hope that he would be tempted to share his castle, situated on a bleak hill, with her third daughter, Whilhelmina, who raved about Scotch ribbon, Scotch music, Scotch pebbles, Scotch vales, Scotch mountains ; in short, a Scotch husband. Louisa Walton was still in town, and dined at Lady Woodford's as often as possible. Lord Woodford, who was famous for taking up people, declared she was the cleverest person he had ever met with, and was a valuable acquisition to their family party. " It is astonishing," said Lady Woodford, one morning, to her husband and daughters, as they were seated at breakfast, " the number of marriages there

have been this year, and yet not one in my family."

"Yes," replied Gertrude, summoning up courage to divulge the important secret; "but I hope soon to see my name among the list of brides. I have deferred informing you, mamma, till I had my father's sanction to the match I am about to make, and I now announce that I hope shortly to present my husband to you, in the person of Count Alberti."

"Count Alberti!" shrieked Lady Woodford; "oh Heavens! is it possible? — no, no, never shall it be, never will I call him son, never shall he be your husband: — Lord Woodford, will you so far forget your rank, your connections, your title, every thing! as to let a common adventurer, a base fortune-hunter, a vile hypocrite, be allied with your family."

"Lady Woodford, do you remember the contents of these bills?"

This simple question had an astonishing effect on her ladyship, whose violent rage settled into a calm, quiet ill-humour, and she took

up the newspaper to conceal her vexation, for the amount of the bills just mentioned was four thousand pounds, which she had squandered, during her residence in the metropolis. "Merciful Powers!" exclaimed Lady Woodford, half starting from her seat; "who could have foretold this? Listen: 'Marriage in high life.—Married, on Tuesday last, at Leamington, the Earl Maurice to Lady Amelia Barnett, daughter to the late, and sister to the present Earl of Elverton; the ceremony was performed by the ——"

"Sara!" cried Gertrude, as stretching forward, she received her sister fainting in her arms. All was consternation; none knew the cause of her sudden illness: Lord Woodford feared the worst, and bitterly reproached himself for not having taken her from London when he first came up. Doctors were summoned, Sara was conveyed to her apartment, and maids ran in confusion from room to room, gathering smelling-bottles, but in reality doing nothing. Lady Woodford and Gertrude hung

over Sara in agony, first rubbing her cold hands, and then applying restoratives. * * * *

It was on a bright day at the end of Autumn, that a bridal party stood before the altar of St. George's Church, Hanover Square. The couple about to be united in one, were both young and handsome. The friends were few that stood on either side of the sacred spot, and but one bride's-maid attended; slender and emaciated was her form, a hectic flush shone on her wasted cheek, — that person was Sara Morley! who now officiated as bride's-maid to her sister. For three months she had wavered betwixt life and death, and when strength again, in a small portion, revisited her frame, she begged her sister's marriage might take place. The ceremony was performed, and Gertrude was made the happy wife of Count Alberti. The new married couple repaired to Hornby Castle, where they intended passing the honey moon. Gertrude would have preferred any other place, for she dreaded revisiting the spot where last she had seen him who was

no more; but the precarious state of Sara's health, deterred her from contradicting the arrangement. A week after Gertrude's marriage, Lord and Lady Woodford set off for Hastings, with Sara, as the mild air of that delightful place was particularly recommended by the faculty, for her disorder; and when her father perceived a delicate pink tint her pale cheek, he returned humble thanks to the Almighty, for restoring his loved child to health. The Miss Wells had left Hornby Castle on a visit to an old uncle of their mother's, who had begged them to come and cheer his solitude, and thereby Gertrude was spared an interview, which would have been most painful to both parties. A short time after her arrival there, she wrote the following letter to her sister; the characters therein were unsteady, and showed that the agitation the writer laboured under, was extreme.

DEAREST SARA,

While I write, I can scarce believe my

senses. — Sidney Wells is not dead ! — I have seen him: but oh ! how changed. Yet my heart has been relieved of a weight, that was too heavy for any one to bear. Yes : I have beheld him ; I have heard his voice ; dare I say it, once more has he breathed the avowal of his love to me. I fear to tell my husband. Counsel me, dearest sister, what to do. Sidney Wells is fearfully altered : I met him in the gardens, and was nearly overcome with surprise, at so unexpected a meeting. He has evidently suffered much ; and his escape, when the ship was wrecked, seems almost miraculous. His manner is so wild and distracted, that I dread leaving the house, for fear of meeting him. When he mentioned Alberti's name, it was said in a voice, and accompanied by a look I shall never forget. Sara, I am certain he is at times deprived of reason, every thing tells of madness. We think of going to Hastings in a fortnight, — I only wish the time was come ; I long to see you. I have not been hasty in my choice of a husband ; Alberti is more than

I deserve, he is all love, tenderness, and goodness towards me. Adieu, dearest sister; I hope to see you quite recovered, and possessing all your former spirits. Believe me, &c. &c.,

GERTRUDE."

Sara was daily sinking under her malady, and it was evident no art could prolong her short life. Gertrude attended her constantly, and tried every expedient to relieve her inward cares, for some private distress seemed to weigh on her mind. "Gertrude, much as I love you, I must refrain from imparting my secret to you; a few days will pass, and it will no longer be hid; betray it not, dearest Gertrude, it will startle you; but I have concealed it long, and though the serpent has stung the breast in which it was nestled, still have I cherished it, and pressing it still closer to my aching heart, so will I die. I know it is wrong, and have been to blame, in giving my thoughts up to an object that never could be aught to me; but you will feel for one, who is more to be

pitied than chided. Here is the key of my desk:—when all is over, the cause of my illness will be revealed to you."

In a week, the mournful tolling of the church bell announced that there was one inhabitant less in the world,—that person was the young and beautiful Sara Morley: her gentle spirit had fled, prepared to rest in the presence of her Heavenly Father. A simple tomb-stone, in the church-yard at Hastings, marks where her body reposes, free from the cares of this life. With a trembling hand, Gertrude unlocked her late sister's desk: the first thing her eyes rested on, was a slight pencil sketch, blistered, and nearly effaced with tears: it was of Lord Maurice. Underneath was written, in a feeble hand, the following lines:

"Mine is a love that ne'er can be repaid,
Yet though 'tis hopeless, it will never fade;
Concealed from all the world, inwrapped shall lie
Within my heart,—so cherished till I die.

And wilt thou shed a tear, when I'm no more,
And o'er my grave thy tender laments pour?
Or wilt thou grieve that one so young should die,
And in the cold, dark vault, forgotten, lie?

Ah! no; for thou must never fully learn,
This unrevealed flame, which fierce doth burn,
Unwept, unheeded, shall that love decay,
As doth the cestus, at the close of day."

* * * * *

The unhappy Sidney Wells, after Gertrude's departure from Hornby Castle, hurried away by a love he could neither gratify nor check, once more embarked on the wide ocean, and sailed for America, where, by the labour of his hands, he managed to support, for a few years, his wretched existence. Lady Caroline Brudenell married Lord Ramsay, but never lived to enjoy the title of countess. Lord Woodford, after his youngest daughter's death, sunk into an apathetic state, which nothing but Gertrude's presence could in any ways overcome. Lady Woodford, perfectly unnerved by

the late calamity, never mentioned London, except to abuse it in the strongest terms. She offered the Miss Wells a home under her roof, and, shortly after, her son married Elizabeth Wells. — Thus endeth Lady Woodford's arduous task of

"MATCH MAKING."

THE DETRIMENTALS;

OR

THE YOUNGER SONS.

BY

CAROLINE FREDERICA BEAUCLERK.

Hard is my doom, at each gay ball, to dance with every bore;
Papa, in anger says, "Don't flirt with the youngest son of four,
Never, my dear, engage yourself to that scamp, Harry Nevill,
When you galoppe with him, I own, I wish him at the devil!"

Oh, dear papa! upbraid me not, and try your wrath to cool,
Lord * * 's so deaf, Lord * * squints, and Sir * * 's a downright fool;
Yes! I'm resolved, that if you wish for talent, wit, or fun,
Always select at every ball, an *handsome* younger son!

Lord Bullion, whom you wish your child, so very much
to marry,
In stature only reaches to,—the elbow of my Harry ;
At Richmond too, with his great weight, he nearly sunk
our boat,
Papa says, "Better marry him, than a man with but one
coat!"

"You ne'er shall valse with my consent with scampish
detrimentals!"
Is it in woman's heart to spurn Harry, in regimentals ?
At each gay ball, I will maintain that in the general run,
The best of all nice partners is, an *handsome* younger son!

For ev'ry throb that rends my heart, for my true love is
beating ;
The clouds that lour whene'er we part, are banish'd at one
meeting ;
The best, the kindest, truest heart, has my gallant lover
Harry,
And though he is a younger son, him only will I marry.

THE ARTIST.

BY

HENRIETTA MARY BEAUCLERK.

"But as he fondly snatch'd the wreath of Fame,
The spectre Poverty unnerv'd his frame:
Cold was her grasp, a withering scout she wore,
And Hope's soft energies were felt no more."

ROGERS.

THE ARTIST.

In the year 1830, Charles Murray, a young artist of great promise, undertook the task of walking through the southern counties of England, in hopes of finding scenes he could immortalize by the power of his pencil. In his wanderings after nature, he became acquainted with Mary Seaford, the only daughter and heiress of a rich country squire. Miss Seaford's company proved so attractive to the young painter, that July, August, and September, passed away, and still he lingered in Hampshire. Mr. Seaford was a generous, warm-hearted old man, and loved his daughter with all the affection of a doating parent; she was the last remaining child of six, who had all died before they reached the age of twelve, and on

her, all his generosity and love were lavished. After the demise of his first wife, thinking his child would require the kindness and attention of a mother, he determined on marrying again; he wished, if possible, to meet with a person a few years younger than himself, and possessing a good even temper. Numerous were the ladies pointed out to him, as gifted with every good quality; amongst others, Miss Letitia Sharply was strongly recommended to his notice. Her friends and relations were unanimous in praises of her amiable disposition, excellent qualities, and kind and generous heart. In some unlucky hour, Mr. Seaford proposed, and was accepted. Mrs. Seaford's enemies said she was many years his senior, and that there were very good reasons for her never having entered the matrimonial state. A man who is bold enough to marry an old maid, it must be acknowledged, deserves a better fate than what is generally in store for him.

It is to be supposed that a person who has arrived at the age of forty, without one offer,

however indifferent, must possess some very great fault, which not all the artifice in the world can conceal. It was so with Mrs. Seaford; her sweet temper was in reality ungovernable, and never before had any one tendered her their fortunes or person. Poor Mr. Seaford discovered, but too late, the rashness of his choice; alas! the Gordian knot was tied, and he had not the power of Alexander to sever it.

Mary Seaford had attained the age of seventeen, when Charles Murray first became acquainted with her. The young artist's appearance was always joyfully hailed by her and her father, and each succeeding day endeared him more closely to them. Mrs. Seaford hated Mary, and did not strive in the least to conceal her dislike from her husband; she was for ever declaring that nothing but her affection for him could make her live with Mary, for her disposition was insupportable. Poor Mr. Seaford feared to contradict his wife in the slightest thing, or even to take his daughter's part; he often found Mary in tears, and learnt with

pain, they were occasioned by her step-mother's ill-nature, and abuse of her.

The young painter's visits grew every time longer, till at length, while superintending his lovely pupil's drawing, the passion so long concealed within his own bosom, broke forth, and Mary promised to become his for ever.

"Of my father's consent, I am certain; he loves me too fondly to refuse the only request I have ever made to him. To-morrow then, we will seek him, and together receive his blessing."

How frequently are our most sanguine expectations blasted! The morrow came, and with it, intelligence which nearly broke the heart of the gentle Mary. Mr. Seaford was found dead in his bed; the physician was summoned, and he decided his death was caused by apoplexy. Mary was refused the consolation of once more gazing on the body of her beloved parent; for Mrs. Seaford had ordered that no one should enter his apartments,— and to prevent the possibility of such a thing, she locked the door, and retained the key. Mary wept in silence; every

thing recalled the affectionate father she had lost. Alone, she sat in the room where last she had seen him; there was his chair, and on the table near it, the book he had read but eight hours before his death. She approached the table; her portrait was there with her age and name written under it by himself. A letter, half-finished, was on the writing-book, it was ordering some fancy article which the day before she had expressed a wish to possess. At this fresh proof of his past affection, her tears fell fast, and she hastily left the room to indulge in the luxury of unforbidden grief. The day of the funeral arrived, and Mr. Seaford's remains were deposited in their last resting place. Contrary to custom, Mrs. and Miss Seaford attended. The ceremony was often interrupted by the sobs and shrieks of his "affectionate" widow, who, throwing herself down by the side of the coffin, declared her determination never to leave it. All the strangers pitied Mrs. Seaford, praised her affection, and ended by declaring that Miss Seaford did not

appear to care much for her late father. Many of the spectators, however, marked the difference in their grief, and whilst they abused the hypocrisy of the one, commended the simple and suppressed, yet deep sorrow of the other.

The day after the funeral, Mrs. Seaford, attired in deep mourning, assembled all the relations of the deceased, and in their presence, her husband's will was read; when to their great surprise, they learned that Mr. Seaford had left the whole of his property, both landed and funded, to his disconsolate widow. Mary's consternation may easily be imagined; her father had always said, that he intended leaving her all he possessed, with the exception of eight hundred pounds a-year to her step-mother. But now that his will was read, not a remembrance, not a token of affection, not the smallest sum, had he bequeathed her.

If Mary had known what was to have been her lot in future years, she would have wept more than she did, at the state of utter dependence she was left in. Months rolled on, and

time, which softens every woe, had lulled the natural, and deep felt grief of Miss Seaford. Charles Murray, after the death of his old friend, was obliged to return to London, to attend the division of a small sum that had been left between himself and two distant relations. Some time elapsed, and he was once more a visitor in Hampshire. There was something in Mrs. Seaford's manner towards him, which was remarkably forward and disagreeable. Mary appeared much out of spirits; she had grown thinner, and her once sparkling eye was dim with weeping. For mere formality sake, Charles determined asking Mrs. Seaford's consent to his marriage with Mary, and for this especial purpose, he requested an interview with her.

"I am aware, Mr. Murray, of the proposal you are about to make; but I think the intercourse you have had with the world, must point out to you, the impropriety of declaring it so soon after the demise of Mr. Seaford. I can only attribute this to the ardour of your attachment. Defer then, for a year, urging your

suit, and I promise you that after that time, it shall not be refused."

"There can be no impropriety, madam," replied Charles Murray, "in my marrying ——"

"Hold, Murray! — However I might feel inclined, in this case, what would the world say to my becoming another's wife, when my late husband has only been buried six months?"

"The present case is perfectly different: I knew not even there was a question of your marrying again. Mary has been ——."

"Villain, wretch, monster of iniquity! oh, where can I find a name vile enough to call you by! — see here the proof of your baseness: — these letters, wherein you have called me by the most tender names, shall be brought in evidence against you!—Can you deny it?—is not this your own writing? — Think not that by marrying Mary you will get *one* shilling: — she is penniless, and entirely dependant on my bounty. — You never *shall* be her husband!" and with a look of mingled hate and fury, she unlocked her desk, and drew from it several

papers and letters. The epistle she now showed him, was one he had written to Mary, a week before he had quitted London; but, to his great surprise, her name had been eradicated, and Letitia, (Mrs. Seaford's,) inserted in its place; it had been so skilfully managed, that no trace of a former name having been there could be seen, or even the mark of a pen-knife. Murray remained astonished. He saw it was useless declaring the letters had been written to Mary, for he had to contend with one, who cared not what falsehoods she uttered. Among the papers in the desk, he discerned a yellow-looking parchment, with a seal affixed to it. He seized hold of it, and glancing rapidly over the contents, he saw it commenced with: "I hereby will all my property to Mary Seaford:" before he had time to continue, Mrs. Seaford snatched it from his hands, and committed this testimony of the deceit she had practised on her step-daughter, to the flames. "Woman!—have you dared to substitute a forged will in

the place of Mr. Seaford's, and dispossessed his daughter of her rightful property ?"

" Mr. Murray, — I will have no further intercourse with you : — leave my house, this instant, and marry that canting hypocrite, Mary Seaford ; from this hour my home shall be no home for her."

In the course of a week, the injured heiress and Charles Murray were made one by holy rite. His exertions were redoubled to get employment, but, alas ! he could find none. The whole of his small income became, in a short space of time, exhausted. His cousins had denied his right to any share of the legacy, and the lawyer, in whose hands he had placed his cause, after losing it, had brought him in a bill, which the whole amount of his slender fortune barely paid. Day and night he laboured, and though his productions were equal to any of the other young artists, yet his drawings had no sale. Mary saw, with great alarm, that the hue of health had forsaken his cheek, his eyes were sunken and dim, and a severe cough had

settled on his chest: daily he became weaker, and his trembling hand was unable longer to guide the pencil. He rejected all Mary's earnest entreaties to see a doctor, saying, "they had not that money to throw away."

"Consider, dearest, your health: surely it is more valuable to me than any thing."

"Mary, — you know not the state of utter ruin in which I am involved. We have been married a year, and not one farthing of our rent has been paid. My bills are numerous: I owe fifty pounds to the person who has furnished me with materials for painting; none of our household bills have ever been discharged, for I have not had wherewith to pay them. I fear to leave the house, for my creditors would surely seize me. — What are we to do? I have put them off from day to day, and they will wait no longer."

'I will apply to Mrs. Seaford; surely she will not refuse to help us in our distress."

"Never!" exclaimed her husband, as the blood mantled high on his pallid cheek; "never

shall you be placed in a situation by me, to be insulted by that woman,—I care not for myself, but that you should be sacrificed so young, and have to fight against poverty; oh, it is indeed hard!—If you had only some friends with whom you could live, I should be happier."

"Leave you, Charles!—never. Have I not sworn to stay with you in sickness and in health, and now that the ills of life are gathering thick over our heads, should I be the first to leave you?—oh, never!"

Another six months passed by, and Charles Murray was stretched on the bed of death.—"Is there no hope, Mary?—will he not give me the smallest sum for it?"

"Alas, no!" replied she, while her tears fell fast; "he says he could not dispose of it again, and that he should lose whatever he gave me for it. His chief objection was, that the picture is not half finished. I told him the state you were in . . . . Oh, God!—he smiled! and said my story—might—be false." Sobs choked her utterance, and the unhappy crea-

ture sank, exhausted, by the side of the mattress, on which her husband lay.

"Weep not for me, dearest," said he, in a voice scarcely audible; "my sufferings must soon cease,—I shall speedily prove another victim to that disease, for which there is no remedy. You are young, and beautiful; Heaven grant you may find friends!—Have you not a crust of bread wherewith I could satisfy these cravings of the body?"

"Alas!—not one morsel!"

Those who have never *felt* poverty, understand not the meaning of the word. The rich, the wealthy, know not the agony of wanting even the plainest food necessary for the sustenance of life, which one piece of that dross they daily squander, in useless frivolities, would serve to procure. The happy mother, surrounded by every luxury that can be obtained, while smiling on her child, thinks not how many parents there are, who scarcely dare gaze on their suffering offspring, for fear of seeing famine marked on every feature, and to hear their cry

for bread, when she has none to give them. Such were Mary's feelings; she would have knelt to her bitterest enemy, and prayed them to give her the smallest piece of money, that she might procure her husband food, and would bitterly reproach herself that she had brought all this upon him; for through her love, he was reduced to starvation.

"Withdraw the window curtain quickly, Mary, that I may catch a last glimpse of the glorious setting sun."

With a trembling hand, she obeyed. The raw cold evening breeze blew in, in gusts. The sick man attempted to rise on his pallet,—the exertion was too much for his feeble constitution,—a hollow cough, that sure omen of consumption, burst from his lips, and as he sank back, exhausted, the crimson blood gushed through his mouth, and dyed the bed coverings. Mary screamed aloud; she had never before witnessed a sight so terrible:—she paused not; in a minute she had rushed from the room, down the dark narrow staircase,

and stood in the apartment belonging to the mistress of the house. "Help! help!" shrieked the distracted wife. — No one was there to answer her call, but there was that on the table, which fixed her gaze, like an enchantment, — it was gold! — she clasped her throbbing brow, — the temptation was strong, — one piece of that ore would perhaps save her husband's life. Money was in her grasp, and yet she dare not seize it. The recollection of the dying emaciated form of her husband, flashed across her mind: — she hesitated no longer, and in an instant a piece of that envied gold was firmly clutched in her hand. But the action was not unwitnessed; the owner of the apartment had entered, and beheld the transaction, and before night had cast its shade over the universe, Mary Murray was the inmate of a prison.

In a fortnight she was appointed to take her trial, as Mrs. Clayton could not be dissuaded from prosecuting her penniless victim. The fatal day arrived, and Mary stood before her

judges; but what a difference had a fortnight made in her appearance: deep-felt shame and anguish, was now added to the look of want and misery she had before; her large eyes were sunk with weeping, and half-closed;—for guilt hung heavy on that fair brow, which before, had never harboured any wrongful thought. Mrs. Clayton, being the only person who had witnessed the theft, the examination was not long ere it was brought to a close. Mary heeded not the trial; her mind was wandering far away; and when the judge addressed her with "Prisoner! guilty, or not guilty?" the crimson blood rushed to her face; as calmly raising her head, and shaking back the dark hair that shaded it, she replied.

"Guilty!"

On being advised by the judge, to plead "not guilty," she exclaimed;—

"Would you have me add a falsehood to my other crime, and so bring down the charge of cowardice and deceit on my head? No; I will

not deny it, I *am* guilty. My husband was dying, I entered Mrs. Clayton's room; Heaven is my witness, it was only to seek assistance; she was not there. I was about to quit, when my eyes fell on some money near me. That very morning Mrs. Clayton had refused to lend me one shilling. To all my prayers and supplications she lent a deaf ear, and even threatened to turn my dying husband out of the miserable garret we inhabited, if I did not raise money enough to discharge the rent which was due. Distracted, I offered some of my husband's sketches for sale, (his drawings had all been seized,) and every where, they declined giving me the smallest trifle for them. Nothing was left but starvation. I saw the money; the evil one possessed me; I could not resist the temptation, and took a sovereign. It was not for myself, but for one, for whom I have suffered much, and would still more, if it could restore him to health; but for pity's sake, let me go to him. Oh God! if he be already

dead!" and the scalding tears gushed through her bony fingers, as she pressed them to her face.

A murmur of compassion rose in the court, mingled with one or two sobs from the female spectators.

"You say you are married, and yet you have no wedding ring; where is it?"

"Alas! it is gone! I pawned it a month ago for two shillings, to buy my husband a blanket."

"You might have spared yourself that trouble and expense," exclaimed Mrs. Clayton, "your husband, — as you call him, — is dead and buried. I thought he could not last long when I saw him the night you went to prison; for he took it sore to heart." The last part of her speech was unheard by Mary, who with a piercing scream fell heavily on the floor.

The jury, after some deliberation, returned a verdict of guilty, and the prisoner was sentenced to be imprisoned for twelve months. When the sentence was repeated to Mary, she exhibited no signs of grief; she could weep no

more; the sources of her heart were dried up; the world to her now, was but a blank canvass,—the form that once animated that space, being expunged. The being for whom she had sacrificed every thing, was no more. Decayed and senseless was the idol of her heart; she had nought to live for — and in three weeks, her body rested in the dust from whence it came.

DON GASPAR

AND

THE PARRICIDE DAUGHTER.

BY

CAROLINE FREDERICA BEAUCLERK.

" If weakness may excuse,
What murderer,—what traitor,—*parricide*,
. . . but may plead it?—
All wickedness is weakness."

MILTON.

DON GASPAR

AND

THE PARRICIDE DAUGHTER.

'Twas night; and the busy hum of Madrid was now hushed in sleep, that universal queller of turbulent passions; leaving the town tranquil and silent as the grave. From one house, however, a blaze of light emanated, like virtue gleaming in golden beams on a benighted world, dark in sin and profligacy. At an open verandah of this brilliantly illumined palace, a youthful cavalier sat, seen in deep converse with a lady; and as the glare of light rested on her visage, her countenance resembled the whitest marble. Her eyes presented a deep

and violet blue, a colour, generally the concomitant of a snowy skin and scarlet lip; long silken locks of chesnut hue fell in negligent and heavy masses over her gracefully sloping shoulders, which, like unto alabaster in appearance, were marked here and there with lines of purple veiny tracery. Art and nature in this, a favoured child, had been competitors in giving grace and captivation to her charms. Pearls like Cleopatra's were pendant from each small round ear, and diamonds set in jet shot sparks of fire from the centre of her girdle. Her dress was of dark ruby velvet, as also the slippers which encased her tiny feet, and which latter were likewise studded with brilliants. The companion of one so lovely, was no less noble in his appearance. Although but a youth, evil passions had fixed upon his brow a fierce and brutal scowl; a deep-cut and black eye, and a supercilious, nay, almost sardonic curve of mouth, had given him an aspect far from inviting, except to those who, blinded by Cupid's powers, look even upon blemishes as

beauty spots. A balmy breath wafted the soft evening gale. — 'Twas the sigh of the beautiful maiden!

"Gaspar, thou art not angry with me?" she said, while she averted her head to wipe away a falling tear. No answer was returned, but the maiden bending on her knee, imprinted a kiss on her lover's hand, and in a tremulous voice continued — "How now, idol of my very soul! not one word! oh, Gaspar! wilt thou not believe what I have so often sworn, that spite of thy poverty I would wed thee; but my mother——"

"Hold, woman!" fiercely interrupted her lover; "you are like all your sex; you fawn, you cringe, on titled, wealthy men. Be they idiots, be they devils, if the purse but chink, 'tis no matter what the heart of the possessor!"

"This from thee!" answered the girl as she burst into a flood of tears; then quickly rising from her recumbent posture, while the flush of wounded pride drew a crimson mantle over her pallid face, she added, "has love so swamped

my woman's pride that I must e'en kneel to man? I did forget me sadly! henceforth my bended knees, uplifted hands, and ardent prayers, to Heaven's high attribute shall alone be offered. Henceforth this foot, this small frail foot, which nobles have fallen before and madly worshipped, shall trample, shall stamp into the dust that vile, base crawling worm yclept man! Go forth, proud noble! proclaim to those who fawn and cringe on men, to learn from me, the way to spurn and scoff at ye. All, all, a savage, devilish race! Gaspar, Gabrielle di Lorma bids thee farewell for ever!" With flashing eye and quivering lip, the maiden strode haughtily away to the adjoining room. A crowd of gay gallants surrounded the beautiful Gabrielle, who soon was seen like a bright meteor, dashing through the mazes of the bolero. When she concluded, all flushed and panting from her exertions, she caught the sad and mournful gaze of Gaspar; but Gabrielle unmoved, linked her arm in that of the wealthy

Duc di Lorenzo, and passed Gaspar with a cold and fixed stare.

Wound a woman's pride, and she ne'er will bless the brutal hand that nipped the tender plant which flowers not again. Gaspar gnashed his teeth, his eyes rolled madly, as rushing from the house he fled rapidly through the deserted streets, and stopped not till almost breathless he fell exhausted on the ground.

Frantic with despair, he beat his breast, he stormed, he raved. "Oh, woman! woman! thou hast, like the fondled asp, dug thy venom-tooth into my bosom's core; but I will hazard all to win thee; by fair or hellish means, Gabrielle, thou shalt be mine. Oh! thou couldst ne'er have loved me, for if thou hadst, thou wouldst have braved a parent's will. What! spurn me because I cannot fling the wealth of Crœsus at thy feet! Hah!" he continued, as if some plan had flashed across his brain; "oh, I could worship the power that bestows on me such a thought; Gabrielle, thou *shalt* be mine!"

Gaspar slouched his plumed hat over his fevered brow, and wrapping himself up in his heavy mantle, walked hastily to a lone part of the town. The morning sun was just faintly beaming, like first love dawning in a virgin's breast. Gaspar descended a flight of steps which led to a cavern cut in a rock, and pressing a concealed spring, a trap-door flew open, and he leapt into a dungeon where the rays of daylight never found entrance. An antique brass lamp was suspended by a rope from the roof, but hardly served to light this gloomy abode, as the farthest parts were in total darkness. The masses of rock overhanging at each side of the lamp, appeared as if studded with precious stones, for the dank and humid dews hung in large drops on them, and reflected a variety of brilliant colours. Gaspar felt as if the icy hand of death had grasped him. Directly under the lamp a form reposed on the ground, closely wrapped in goats' skins, the only part visible was a foot that seemed almost too small for use, and close by, a little black slipper

richly embroidered in silver. A faint shriek, followed by the exclamation of "My own Gaspar!" and the reposing form sprang up, and rushing towards the new comer, clasped him in her arms. The fillet which bound her head had fallen off, and her slight figure was completely shrouded by the profusion of hair which streamed down in glorious effulgence. This fairy-like being was the only daughter of the Spanish miser, Jerôme.

"Gaspar!" said the lovely girl, and she clapped her hands in transport; "angel, let me gaze on thee for ever!"

"Hush Juâna, I cannot bear thy trifling this night. Off girl! cling not so on me." Juâna fell at his feet like a crouching spaniel.

"Forgive me love, but seeing thee hath turned me mad."

"Well, well," said Gaspar impatiently; "where is thy father?"

"Talk not of my father," answered the girl; "talk of our marriage, aye Gaspar, talk of *that*."

"Hold Juâna!" said Gaspar; "thy tongue is like a ceaseless clock. Is thy father now sleeping?—draw near, my own idol. Hard is thy fate, poor girl, immured in this horrid cell, starved by a miserly parent, who has, thou hast confessed, thousands."

"Aye, millions in his iron box," answered Juâna; "but 'tis a turn-up of which death I die first,—a broken heart or starvation."

"Juâna, thou shalt escape both. Do what I tell thee!—thou wilt?—Dear girl, thou shalt be happy—thou shalt be my wife!"

"Oh, Gaspar! call me but *wife* and I will endure, joyfully endure, all the torments of hell, even unto damnation! Gaspar, let me but call thee *husband!*—show me the way to escape, and on my bended knees by my very soul I'll swear to do it! Gaspar, look not so wild—thy gaze is killing me. What means that poniard? Ha, fiend! thou mean'st to stab my father!—thou must not, canst not! Oh God! murder my poor old father! the deed is too

damnable! Oh that hell were yawning at our feet, by Heaven I'd hurl thee in!"

Juâna would have fled, but Gaspar seized her by her long black hair, and pointing the dagger to her bosom said, "This then to thy heart!"

Juâna bared her lovely breast, and replied, "Be merciful, — kill, oh kill me quickly!"

Gaspar unmanned, brushed away the scalding tears that sprung forth abundantly, and said, "Juâna, thou lovest me not — I was deceived."

"Oh, Gaspar! I would do all I could for thee, but murder my father; the deed is too foul — too horrid! My head is whirling like a revolving wheel. Oh God! my heart, my heart!"

Gaspar clasped her to his breast, and adjured her by all a lover's fond endearing terms, to make him blest. At length, Juâna led the way to another part of the cave, where the old miser slept. She would have left Gaspar to do

the deed alone, but he clutched her hard and bade her hold the lamp. Juâna saw Gaspar seize the old man by the arm — she heard her father murmur forth, "I have no money — I am a miserable beggar — oh spare me!" A scream almost rent Juâna's heart. A purple stream of blood trickled to her feet; her father lay weltering in his gore.

"The key!" said Gaspar, gruffly.

Juâna raised the head of the corse, and amidst the bloody straw, found the key. Gaspar opened a large iron chest which contained nought but old bones, carrion meat, rotten eggs, and such refuse as old Jerôme had been in the habit of picking up in the streets, and which were his daily fare. With many exclamations of disgust, Gaspar cleared out the box, and at the bottom discovered a parchment, from which he read as follows: — "In case I should die suddenly, or meet my death by unfair means, I write this will for the satisfaction of those who consign my carcase to the dust from whence it was formed. All the money I

have saved, I have placed at Gusman's bank, for the benefit of my sisters, Mercia and Henriquetta, and their respective families. For my only daughter Juâna, I disinherit her and leave her without a maravido, as an ungrateful disobedient child, who lavishes her love on a profligate spendthrift heartless noble, by name Don Gaspar." The paper dropped from Gaspar's hand, —" disinherited, no money!"

Oh Gaspar! let us not wait for money, let us fly; let us endeavour to forget this horrid murder."

" Fly with *thee* Juâna! with a *Parricide Daughter!* have the arms of a murderess coiled round my neck? *No,* woman! beautiful as thou art, there is not one of Satan's devils who does not bear a more heavenly impress than I see in thy gloating eye. Murderess! Parricide! approach not. Were I to fold thee to my bosom, to calcined cinders should I turn, seared to the very bone by sin! Wed thee, Juâna! sooner would I wed a cloven-footed fiend. Nought could be so loathsome to my

eyes as thou, an impure maiden with hands imbrued in blood ;—marry *thee!* 'twould be perdition,—hell! Wed *thee!* a merry tale forsooth! some day be murdered by my bride, — ha, ha, ha!"

" Gaspar, thou lovest another; I know thou dost. For if for me alone thy love had burned, would such a mere puff have so blown out the flame? Ah, no! for well I know that he who really loves, can hold a torch e'en to his mistress' faults, and swear *those* are her virtues! Gaspar! better rot in the earth, and be the food for worms than live to be accounted infamous. Yet that even I could have borne; nay more —eternal misery — a burning hell hereafter, so thou hadst called me *wife.* Oh, for pity's sake say not *no!* again, 'tis more than I can bear; better far to die, — and I can die but once, — than to live dishonoured!" Juâna snatched the poniard which had stabbed her father, and which was still reeking with gouts of blood; plunging it into her bosom, she uttered—" 'Tis but a prick!"

Suddenly two men rushed into the cavern, followed by a few of the neighbouring populace. A cry of horror escaped them as they found themselves standing in a pool of blood. — "Young noble, we come to conduct thee to prison, on suspicion of murdering that old man. — Hearing cries of lament, we hastened hither, and find thee covered with blood, and the old miser butchered."

"You are mistaken," answered Don Gaspar, "I am innocent. — Yonder maiden, who stands pale and trembling, is the guilty being. — See, — in her hand is clutched the murderous steel!"

"Gaspar!" shrieked Juâna, — the blood from her own wound flowed fast, — she tried to speak, but her tongue clave to her mouth; — she fell lifeless on the ground.

"Away with her to prison!" was Don Gaspar's order, as they bore the insensible, but still breathing girl, from the cavern.

* * * * *

On a bright summer's day, at the end of July, a numerous bridal train slowly proceeded up one of the principal streets of Madrid, leading to a large public square: the silvery sounds of the lute wafted on the hot breeze, mingled with the joyous laugh, and gladsome voices: silken banners of gaudy hue waved on high, and the richly scented tresses of the damsels shed their perfume around; liveried menials walked on either side, vainly striving to keep off the admiring crowd, as they pressed forward to gaze on the lovely Donna Gabrielle di Lorma, who was now to be united to the handsomest noble in the land, Don Gaspar. The betrothed pair headed the procession, mounted on two snowy steeds, which ever and anon champing their golden bits, tossed their small heads in pride, and made the silver bells, closely studded on the reins, tinkle, almost to the measure of music. The luxuriant locks of Gabrielle were thickly plaited with pearls; here and there they were looped up with rubies and diamonds, a wreath of which gems encircled her fair brow;

her robe was of white satin, embroidered in pearls; her slender and delicate waist was confined by a cordelière of brilliants; the small hand which held the rein, and checked the ardour of her prancing steed, was incased in a white glove, embroidered in silver, whilst the other held a large fan, composed of coloured feathers, for the purpose of shading her lovely visage from the sun. The radiant smiles she lavished on her bridegroom were unheeded, as, pale and melancholy, he rode, bearing his plumed beaver in his hand, and the thick, dark curls almost shading his care-worn brow. The two families followed, nobly mounted, and decked with all splendour.

Suddenly the tones of the muffled drum were heard, and at the opening of a side street, a procession of soldiers mingled with the bridal cortège. A man followed, clothed in black, and masked, holding a hatchet in his hand: then came a small, and youthful female, habited in white, her feet bare, and her long, black hair, almost entirely covering her form, reached the

ground; her lip was blanched, and her slight marked eyebrows were contracted by grief, but not a tear glistened on the lid of her Persian-cut eye. The crowd retreated. Some exclaimed, with horror, "'Tis the parricide daughter!" whilst others shouted, with savage delight, "On,—on to the execution!—Let her die!"

Suddenly, a scream was heard, and Juâna, the criminal, was clinging, with enchained hands, to the bridle of Don Gaspar's steed.—"Save me! save me!" shrieked the maiden; "I am not guilty.—Dear Gaspar, have mercy!—let me not die!" Terrified, he on whom she called answered not; the quick heaving of his bosom alone portrayed his feelings were acute. "Oh! Gaspar!—as you hope for mercy hereafter, show some now to me.—Oh, God! must I then die?—Gaspar, *you* can save me!" and the distracted girl had nearly sprung upon his horse, when two guards seized her, and lifting her in their arms, bore her to the place she had escaped from. "One word," said Juâna,

" and I will offer no more resistance, — a few moments, and I shall cease to exist. — Gaspar! —if the prayers of a guilty wretch can avail with Him above, thy life will be a happy one; — but in the midst of joy, let not the recollection of the miser's daughter be entirely effaced: a few short moments, and this face, on which thou hast so often gazed, and pressed to thy lips, will be cast into the mire, and therein trampled on;—a few moments, and this broken heart will no more ache, — grief will then repose, — tears will then cease to flow, — and Juâna's name will be linked with that of Parricide!—But this weakness is now of no avail:— Gaspar! — art thou happy? — Does yon fair dame possess thy heart whole, and untouched?" Gaspar bowed his head,—and the Spanish girl, meekly folding her hands on her throbbing breast, while her tears flowed many and fast, added: " Then Heaven be my witness, I die content. — Gaspar! dear idol of my fervent adoration, *thou* art happy! — 'Tis well. — It is not fit that I should live! — my sight would

blast thy peace. — Farewell for ever! I die content!" and murmuring an inward prayer, Juâna joined the escort, and proceeded to the scaffold, which was erected in the square. The bridal party maintained a solemn silence,— a tear glistened in the blue eye of the noble Donna Gabrielle, as she vainly essayed to unravel from Gaspar's look this mystery. — The rolling of the drum ceased, — the bridal train advanced through the square: — Gabrielle hid her face in her hands, and wept.

A shout arose, and a black mass was seen coming towards Gaspar: for a minute the soft breeze suspended the floating mass over his head. The mob pressed forward to behold Juâna. Violent hootings, shouts and execrations on the parricide daughter alarmed the steeds: Gaspar's became unmanageable, and as it tried to break forth, the floating mass fell on the horse and rider. — It was Juâna's hair, which had been cut from her small head, and thrown to the crowd. — Shrieks were heard, mingled with confused sounds of hooting

and despair; and at the same moment that Juâna had ceased to exist, by means of the executioner's axe, Gabrielle was bending over the lifeless form of Gaspar: — he had been thrown from his horse, and killed!

THE END.

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